LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1800

THE

CHURCH-MEMBER'S

Manual and Prayer Book;

CONTAINING

A DESCRIPTION OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF RELIGION IN THE SOUL;

EXPOSITIONS OF THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH AND OF CHRISTIANITY;

AND ALSO

FORMS OF PRAYER;

TOGETHER WITH DIRECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS IN REFERENCE TO THE DUTIES OF PRACTICAL PIETY;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS IN THE CHURCH.

BY J. STONEBERGER,

MINISTER OF THE GERMAN REFORMED CHURCH, PATTON, MO.

"Lo, I am with you alway."

CHAMBERSBURG, PA.;
PRINTED BY M. KIEFFER & CO.
1855.

BX 9571
.S7

Copyright secured according to law.

TO YOU,

THE DEAR PEOPLE OF GOD,

AND TO THE MEMBERS OF

The German Reformed Church

IN PARTICULAR,

IN THANKFUL REMEMBRANCE OF OUR JOYS AND DELIVERANCES AND MUTUAL BENEFITS, RECEIVED FROM THE GREAT HEAD OF THE CHURCH,

THIS VOLUME,

IN HUMBLE PRAYER FOR THE DIVINE BLESSING,

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

This book has been prepared with a view to supply a want in the German Reformed Church. The idea of writing it was first suggested by the fact of a church-member having inquired of the writer, if our Church had published such a work. Accordingly, after consulting some of my ministerial brethren about the matter, I went forward with the enterprise, with such ability as I possessed, and such aid as a limited library afforded. I am very sensible of the defects of the book; but my apology for them, is, that it was written during such leisure moments as I could command in the intervals of ministerial labor and of school-teaching, in a very difficult missionary field.

With regard to the style of the composition, so far as it is original, the only apology I have to offer is, that it is the author's own. I did not aim at elegance, if even I were capable of it. The book is intended for the mass of readers, who do not relish refinement of language so much as plainness and utility. It is hoped, however, it will not be unacceptable to a more refined and cultivated taste.

It was not my aim to be entirely original, but to select

the best matter I could find, and compile it for the use of the church-member. I have freely used the aid of Matthew Henry, and Philip Doddridge, and William Jay, in furnishing matter for these pages. In preparing the biographical sketch of Zwingle, I consulted Dr. Mayer's History of the German Reformed Church, D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, and the Life of Zwingle, published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

Although the work is designed for the members of the German Reformed Church in particular, any evangelical Christian will find matter for edification in its perusal.

I commend the book to the Church, and to that God and Saviour, who alone can make it a blessing, and who has promised to be with his people to the end. If it will be the means of awakening and edifying any of God's dear children, it will fulfill the desire of "one of the least among the brethren."

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

The Nature and Design of the Church, - - - - Page 9

CHAPTER II.

The Nature and Design of Baptism, and the Duty of Baptized Persons growing out of their Relation to the Church—Proof for Infant Baptism, - - - - - - - - - - - - - 20

CHAPTER III.

An Address to Very Young Persons who have been baptized in Infancy, - - - - - - - - - - - - - 35

CHAPTER IV.

The Duty of the Young to recognize their Obligations and consecrate themselves to God, - - - - - - - - - - 39

CHAPTER V.

A Call to those who have not yet been baptized, - - - 45

CHAPTER VI.

An Address to Catechumens, or Persons studying the Catechism, with a view of joining the Church by Confirmation, - - - - - 52

CHAPTER VII.

Confirmation, - - - - - - - - - - - - 56

CHAPTER VIII.

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, - - - - - - - 62

CHAPTER IX.

Reflections after Communion, - - - - - - - - 73

CHAPTER X.

The Church-member considered in Relation to that Branch of the Church of which he is a Member, - - - - - - - - - 90

CHAPTER XI.

Missions, - - - - - - - - - - - - 97

CHAPTER XII.

Religious Newspapers—Periodicals and Books, - - - 109

CHAPTER XIII.

The Church-member in the Congregation—His Relation to his Pastor and the Preaching of the Gospel, - - - - - - Page 103

CHAPTER XIV.

The Church-member in the Congregation, continued—His Duty to promote Church Psalmody, - - - - - - - - - 117

CHAPTER XV.

The Church-member in the Congregation, continued—Attendance on Public Worship, - - - - - - - - - - - - 131

CHAPTER XVI.

The Use and Importance of Sabbath Schools, and the Duty of the Church-member in regard to them, - - - - - - - - 143

CHAPTER XVII.

The Church-member in the Congregation, continued—His Relation to his Fellow-members, - - - - - - - - - - 148

CHAPTER XVIII.

Church Authority and Discipline—Conduct of the Church-member in reference thereto—Promoting the Welfare of the Congregation, - 162

CHAPTER XIX.

The Church-member's religious Experience—Danger of Declension—The steps of Declension pointed out, - - - - - - - - 198

CHAPTER XX.

The Church-member falling into open Sin—The means of Recovery pointed out, - - - - - - - - - - - - - 211

CHAPTER XXI.

Some Suggestions preparatory to Communion in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, - - - - - - - - - - - 227

CHAPTER XXII.

The Church-member in secret—In the Closet and private Life, - 239

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Church-member in the Family—His Duty to use his Influence for the Spiritual good of the Family—Family Prayer urged—Forms of Prayer, - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 264

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Church-member in the Hour of Death, - - - - - 306

CHAPTER XXV.

Historical Sketches, - - - - - - - - - 313

CHAPTER I.

THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF THE CHURCH.

The Church is a divine institution, by means of which God reveals himself to man. By the fall and disobedience of our first parents, man became ignorant of God, and in this condition would have been obliged to grope his way in darkness down to death. God, however, devised a way by which man might have restored to him righteousness and life. This restoration is effected through the Church. The knowledge of Christ comes to us through this divine channel. Through the same medium, is imparted to us from God, the knowledge of his secret counsel and will concerning our redemption. Through the means of grace in the Church, also, the righteousness and life of Christ are applied to us. The Church is the bearer of Christ's life.

As such, the Church is,

1. A teaching Church. By God's covenant of grace, which is well ordered in all things and sure, a people were secured, who transmitted the promise of a Redeemer made in Paradise, from one generation to another. By God's wonder-working providence, Moses was made the medium of recording this promise, as also the promise to Abraham, that through his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. Through the Church, with Noah as its organ and representative, God taught man, that he was a righteous God, and corroborated his teaching by the terrible judgments of the deluge. Through Moses, chosen from among his brethren, he, at another time, taught man the moral law

written upon tables of stone. By means of prophets in great numbers, "rising early and sending them,"—as it is expressed by Jeremiah,—God taught the Church, and through the Church the world, their obligations. But especially by Him who spake as man never spake, did the Almighty teach man his duty and his destiny.

The Church is still a teaching Church. It is her duty and vocation to carry out the idea of her founder; to develop the great truths revealed through the prophets and apostles, and especially through Jesus Christ as the chief teacher, in their application to present circumstances: thus bringing out of the treasury of God's word, things new and old, for the edification of itself in its individual members, and for the conversion of the world.

The Church is the medium through which the world is to be enlightened and guided. She is, therefore, not to hide her light under a bushel. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." The Church is, accordingly, an institution ordained of God, for the dissemination of true religious knowledge among men.

2. The Church is also the source of a true religious life. Man, without a true religious life—by which is meant, a nature in harmony with the law and will of God—cannot comprehend the truths of the gospel in their length and breadth, appreciate them in their full significance, nor relish them for their great excellence. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." And the Saviour says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye must be born again."

Man is born into the world with a sinful nature, and he is, consequently, dead in trespasses and in sins. In view

of this deplorable fact, it is said: "Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." It is only by receiving life from Christ, that man can appreciate, or love "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord." It is only by receiving from him their spiritual life, that men can receive from him light, to the saving of their souls. Being brought into this state, they begin to see the beauty of religion, and the suitableness of Christ as their deliverer, their light and life; and though it be at first, with dim vision, so that they "behold men as trees walking," yet their vision becomes brighter and brighter. They are in a gracious state, and can say, "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." They are translated from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel, and, with the Psalmist, may say, "In thy light shall we see light." They are surrounded by a new spiritual atmosphere, and live in a new world. "Old things have passed away, and behold all things have become new." The old man is crucified, dead and buried, and they are raised up to a new life. They receive a new principle of life, which is the power of God in their souls, transforming them into new creatures, producing new desires, new motives, new inclinations, new thoughts, new feelings, and new actions; new habits and new courses of conduct.

Christ is the principle, the source or fountain of this life. The beloved disciple John, says: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "These (things) are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name." This truth is also expressed by Paul, when he says, "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

This life is not merely a life of moral influence; it is

not merely the effect of ideas and principles—of laws and motives. It is this, and much more besides. As has already been stated, without a true religious inward life, the ideas and principles, the laws and motives of Christianity, cannot be carried out to their practical results. It is not merely by receiving the truths of the Scriptures into the mind and the understanding, that the soul can be renewed into the image of its Maker. There must be an inward change of the soul, bringing it from the sphere of nature, into the sphere of grace.

Neither is this life the influence of the Holy Spirit in itself considered. Many persons may be, as many have been, under the influence of the Spirit, in convincing them of sin; and yet resist this influence, and never obtain a true religious inward life. It is only when the Holy Spirit works faith in them, coöperating with them, and bringing them to lay hold on Christ, and become united to him as the branch is united to the vine, that they can be said to possess true religious life.

It is this idea, that seems to have been the leading thought in the teaching of the apostle John. He calls Christ the "word of life." To him, Jesus was a living revelation of deity in human form. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." The incarnation was to him the central fact of Christianity. In it he saw divinity brought down to humanity, and humanity raised up and joined with the divinity; thus forming a new life power in the heart of humanity,

for the redemption of fallen man. It was to him such a central fact, because it carried with it the idea of a principle, or source of life for the salvation of man. He says: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." Those who receive this life have an unction from the Holy One: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." They have an anointing, that preserves them from fatal errors: "But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie." This was the fundamental truth, that God in human flesh is the fountain of a true religious life for man, and in view of this fact, he says: "Every spirit," that is, every form of teaching and preaching, "that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world."

With regard to this truth, the Saviour himself says: "I am the way, the truth and the life." "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." Jesus repeated the idea of his being the source of a new life, at various times and in various ways, illustrating it by many expressive figures of speech, and when, on one occasion, objection was made to these expressions, he answered: "What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" What, if ye shall see him ascend up, and thereby prove that he came down from heaven? "It is the Spirit that quickeneth:" as if to say, It is the spiritual life that

dwelleth in me, that shall reanimate this body. "The flesh profiteth nothing," that is: this body must die, though it be fed and nourished with the best food; this body is mortal, but it must put on immortality, by means of spiritual power. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life;" that is, they express things that relate to life, to immortality, to an order of existence beyond that which is merely human—to a heavenly existence, an existence above nature. This the Jews and some of his disciples could not understand; because they did not view the matter right, and had not faith and spiritual discernment. Those whose judgments are perverted, and whose hearts are held in unbelief, do not receive these truths; but those who are properly indoctrinated, and free from erroneous modes of thought, and, besides this, have the anointing from above, which teaches them all things, enabling them to comprehend the mysteries of the kingdom of God—understand the truth and force of these expressions of the Saviour.

In the next place, it may be remarked, that this life,—this new order of existence—is to be found in the Church. The life which dwells in Christ's glorified body in heaven, flows over into his people through the medium of the Church. At the day of Pentecost, which was the birth day of the New Testament Church, this life was poured upon the apostles in full measure. Prior to this time, under the Old Testament dispensation, divine life had been imparted only in an occasional way, and to a limited extent. Even the apostles did not possess it as fully before, as they did after the day of Pentecost; and for this reason the Saviour said, "It is expedient that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come." This was a memorable day, a day which prophets and kings desired to see, but saw it not. Now the Comforter came, and the Saviour came, and the Father came, in obedience to the Saviour's promise, "I will

come unto you, and *we* will make our abode with you." The triune God entered into a more close and permanent union with man, through the man Christ Jesus and the apostles and their disciples, accompanying the event with divers signs, and miracles, and gifts, of the Holy Ghost. Now, as the apostles engaged in breaking bread and in prayers, in celebrating the Lord's Supper according to his dying command, they realized, as they did not before, the meaning of the words, "This is my body, which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of me;" and of those other words, "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "This is that bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die." Such is the nature of the Church, that this bread and this life are derived through her. By her prayers, her worship, and her sacraments, souls are blessed.

From what has been said of the nature of the Church, her design becomes apparent. She is designed to be the channel of communication between God and man, for the purpose of man's redemption. Her mission is to preach the gospel to every creature. She is to carry out her design until the gospel is preached over the whole world, and the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth, as the waters cover the sea. Not only is her existence to be extended over every part of the world, but her life and her light are to pervade every department of human life. Both art and science, and all that employs the human mind, shall be more and more penetrated with the sanctifying power of religion. The gospel is represented as leaven, that is gradually to leaven the whole lump; and as a grain of mustard-seed, which, in the beginning, is the least among herbs, and is yet to become a great tree, in whose branches the fowls of heaven shall rest; and also, as a stone cut out of the mountains, which is to roll till it fills the whole earth. This, however,

will not be accomplished without many trials and persecutions. There will be many an advance and retreat before a final conquest is achieved. The Church, notwithstanding, is adapted to accomplish her design. By means of her, the Lord will overturn and overturn, until he, whose right it is, shall reign.

Such a divine institution is the Church. As such, she is an object of faith. She carries with her a true religious life. The Holy Spirit abides in her. Christ, by his grace and Spirit, is ever present with her, and the Father protects her. The Church, as a visible Church, is the bearer of an invisible grace. The sacraments are outward signs and seals of an inward and spiritual grace. If we do not receive this grace, it is because of our unbelief. The grace is still there, though we may not obtain it; and though it may be difficult to determine in what particular individuals this life of Christ dwells; and though the state of religion may be low, and many may be in the Church who are not of the Church, yet the life and light of the Lord are still present in the Church as a whole. He will reserve to himself his thousands, who shall not bow the knee to the image of Baal. This fact our faith should firmly take hold of. Faith in the Church is as necessary as faith in Christ—that is, faith in her as a divine institution,—faith in her because Christ is in her; faith in the Church as a divine institution also, is as necessary as faith in Christ as a divine Saviour. It is in the Church that Christ is found. He has chosen Zion for his habitation. In the Church he reveals himself as he does not in the world. In the Church the life and light of God's Spirit never goes out; for the Saviour has said, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world." "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined," and that more gloriously under the New, than under the Old dispensation. For, "if the ministration of death, written and

engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was done away: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?" The Church is Christ's mystical body, and all her services have a divine power in them that is calculated to draw men to Christ.

Let your faith, therefore, in the Church be firm. Look for Christ in the Church, and not out of it. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Here let your roving heart be fixed. Then, if any false prophets shall arise, and show great signs and wonders, you may be unshaken in mind. "If any shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, and lo there is Christ, believe them not. If they shall say to you, Behold he is in the desert: go not forth; behold he is in the secret chambers, believe it not; for as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall the coming of the Son of man be." We have seen the light of the Son of man in the history of the Church from the beginning to the present time. We have seen his power and grace in the sanctuary. We have seen the stately steppings of him who walks in the midst of the golden candle-sticks, for the last eighteen centuries and a half; and they shall continue to be seen until the end of the world, when he shall come in power and great glory. As members of the German Reformed portion of the Church of Jesus Christ, let us cherish the memory of his grace in our ecclesiastical ancestors. Witness the contending and lamented Zwingli; the mild and conciliatory Ecolampadius; the industrious and zealous Bullinger; but especially, the excellent Ursinus and Olevianus; whose faith let us follow, considering the end of their conversation. And as members of the Church Catholic, let us cherish the memory of God's grace, wherever we find it.

Above all, let us admire and adore the person of Him, who is the author and dispenser of grace, and who makes his people what they are.

> "I love thy kingdom, Lord,
> The house of thine abode,
> The Church our blessed Redeemer saved,
> With his own precious blood.
>
> I love thy Church, O God!
> Her walls before thee stand,
> Dear as the apple of thine eye,
> And graven on thy hand."

A PRAYER FOR A CHURCH-MEMBER IN VIEW OF THE CHURCH.

O Lord! I would bow with humble reverence before thee. Do thou accept my approach. Thou art present indeed as a God of love and infinite glory. Thou hast revealed thyself to man. Blessed be thy holy name. With gratitude, would I adore thee for the light and love thou hast manifested in thy Church. Mine ears have been saluted with the sweet sound of the word of life. Thy good Spirit has wooed me to thee, when I was yet in the darkness of this world's night. When I was yet in the dead, the lifeless condition of a child of nature and of wrath, thou didst call upon me to turn unto thee and live. Mine eyes have opened on the kingdom of grace. Mine has become the unspeakable privilege of being born in a Christian land and in sight of the Church. O may she become my spiritual mother indeed!

May I not be permitted to look only upon the outward appendage, the things which are visible; but may I be permitted to realize the presence of the holy and infinite One. May I be ingrafted into Christ, not merely by outward baptism; but also by faith of the operation of God. May I be enabled to yield myself up to thee, as one alive from the dead. May I be so strengthened that I shall, by my own free act and from my inmost soul, take hold of that which was secured to me in baptism; and may I have the inexpressible privilege of approaching the throne of grace as

one of thy redeemed children. May I be enabled to enter into thy holy sanctuary with those who keep holy-day, with a devout heart. May I look upon the soul-melting services of thy house and taste that thou art good indeed. Lord, fill me with thy fullness.

May I be able to walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. May I realize the communion of saints. May I give thee unceasing thanks for the evidences of thy grace, and the continuance of thy presence in the Church. May the examples of martyrs and holy men of old inspire me with courage; and may I see them rising before me as beacons of light to guide me in my way to heaven. May I follow them as they followed Christ; and amid the waves of persecution, and the winds of false doctrine, accompanied with the temptations of the world, the flesh and Satan, may my mind be kept in perfect peace, by being stayed on thee. May I cheerfully suffer affliction and every calamity of life for thy sake and for the Church's sake. May my love to the Church be a continual flame, and may I not be separated from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. And finally, when my eyes shall close in death, may my spirit return to thee, who gave it, and be with Christ above. And to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

THE NATURE AND DESIGN OF BAPTISM, AND THE DUTY OF BAPTIZED PERSONS GROWING OUT OF THEIR RELATION TO THE CHURCH; PROOF FOR INFANT BAPTISM.

BAPTISM is a sacrament which signifies and seals, or secures, where the conditions are complied with, the gift of divine grace. When the Saviour gave the commission to the apostles, he said, "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." Their teaching and their preaching were to be accompanied with baptism and church membership. The nations were informed, that, if any were saved, they would be saved only by the grace and power going forth from the Church. Hence, the disciples of Christ went about preaching and ordaining elders in every city, saying, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel; repent ye, and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins."

The nature of baptism, as applied to infants, is such that it secures to them the influences of God's Spirit, for the purpose of producing saving faith in them, and of thus bringing them to become partakers of Christ with all his riches and gifts. It is, therefore, a means of grace by which God's promise of special grace is secured, and by which our obligations are recognized. "The election of grace" cannot be carried out, except by the means of grace. In its nature, the grace of our Lord is confined to the means of grace. Baptism is one of these, and, we may say, the chief means.

There is no decree to prevent those who are baptized from coming to Christ, and becoming the children of God in

truth. The way is open to them, in a special manner, to come to Christ; for they have the promise of the Father, and the aid of the Holy Ghost. The promise was first given to Eve and her seed; but to make it more effectual, God renewed it to Abraham, and accompanied it with the sign of circumcision. He said: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee." To complete the promise and make it still more effectual to the salvation of man, it was fulfilled in Christ and accompanied with baptism. See third chapter of Galatians. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Peter, on the day of Pentecost, in alluding to the promise being carried out by means of baptism, said: "Repent and be baptized—for the promise is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off," &c.

Under the Jewish dispensation, when the conditions of the covenant were complied with, it was always fulfilled and resulted in salvation. In Abraham the condition was faith, which was afterwards signified and sealed by circumcision. In his offspring it was faith, which was obtained after, and in connection with circumcision. Hence the apostle Paul says: "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way;—chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" Shall their rejection of divine grace destroy its existence in the means? It is still there, though they may not accept it. Shall their unbelief destroy its nature? It is still adapted to accomplish the object in view, if the means are used according to the design. Baptism, like circumcision, makes its subjects, to

a certain extent, members of the Church. It secures to the children of believers, that to which they are entitled as children of Christian parents. As such, they are considered as belonging to the Saviour. To this Paul alludes, when he says: "Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy." That is, they are set apart for a holy purpose; to be God's servants, and to be brought up under the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and as they are thus considered as set apart, they are entitled to baptism, as a means of renewing their hearts and minds, and of forming Christ in them.

Baptism, as thus viewed, is no unmeaning rite; but it is full of the most precious significancy, and most valuable, as one of the arms with which God rescues sinners as brands from the burning. It is the main channel through which God will perpetuate and fulfill his promise of salvation to mankind. Persons are sometimes made to doubt the validity of infant baptism, because they do not understand its nature and design. I would suggest the study of the Bible doctrine of infant baptism, as it is set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism. And in connection with that, I would refer the reader to other works on the subject, such as "Brownlee on Baptism," and "Conrad on Baptism." But as there may be some, who will not have an immediate opportunity to peruse the works referred to, I will briefly state some of the arguments in support of infant baptism.

1. The nature and design of baptism, as it is gathered from the Scriptures, and from the belief of the primitive Church, was such, that it secured particular privileges to its subjects.

Baptism was for the remission of sins; that is, for the remission of sins so far that it brought the individual into the covenanted mercies of God, which he could not lose but by his own rejection of them; or by not following up the grace

secured to him, whether he be an adult or infant. This view of the nature and design of baptism is involved in the declaration of Peter, on the day of Pentecost: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent ye and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit; for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The nature of Christianity and of the Church, was such, that it embraced the Jew and the Gentile in the same order of life which existed before, and which was now changed only in the manner and means in which it was carried forward, and in the extent to which these means were adapted to carry it. The Gentile was not required to become a Jew first. Christianity embraced also the old and the young. All stages of our human life, from the cradle to the grave, were sanctified by the Lord as his own. Hence he said: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The Church is a nursery for the kingdom of God in heaven, and if there is room for infants in the kingdom of God in heaven, there is room for them in the kingdom of God on earth.

The design of receiving infants by baptism into the Church, is, that they may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. It is not to save them by baptism, if they die in infancy; but, that they may become Christians, if they should live, and grow up to be conscious agents of their own actions—that they may not become the subjects of the kingdom of Satan—that they may not become prodigal sons who shall wander far away, and never return to their father's house.

Baptism is the rite of initiation into the Christian Church. It was substituted in the room of circumcision, because it

better suited the expansive design of the New dispensation. The New dispensation was made broader than the Old; but if infants were not comprehended in it, it would, in that respect, have become more limited; which would have been contrary to its design. But, if infants are subjects of the kingdom of heaven, they are lawful subjects of baptism—they are lawful subjects of the seal of the covenant. Such was the fact under the Old Testament economy, and as baptism comes in the place of circumcision, this constitutes an argument in favor of infant baptism, which never can be successfully controverted.

That baptism came in the room of circumcision, is evident from the fact, that circumcision was abolished, and baptism was instituted as the rite of initiation into the Church. Baptism became the door of entrance.

When Gentiles with their families sought admittance into the Jewish Church, they were required first, to be baptized, and then circumcised. Christ, however, commanded his disciples only to baptize: "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. Circumcision was dispensed with, and baptism alone retained, for reasons known to God. The substance of saving faith was the same; but the form, or way in which it was sealed and produced, was changed by divine appointment. "So then, they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The objects of faith were the same; but the scope of vision was enlarged, and the power of divine grace increased, and the means of grace were—for reasons known to the divine mind—altered to adapt them to existing circumstances.

2. The history of infant baptism shows it to be a part of "the faith once delivered to the saints."

From what has come down to us by the writings of the

primitive fathers of the Church, we learn, that it was practiced in their day, and that it was received by them from the Apostles.

Origen, who lived and wrote about two hundred years after the death of Christ, and about one hundred and fifty after the apostle John, says: "The Church received from the Apostles a tradition to baptize little children also. For they knew as stewards of the divine mysteries, that there existed in all the stain of sin, which needs to be washed away by water and the Spirit, whence even the body itself is styled a body of sin."

Cyprian also, who lived in the same age, boldly defends the Church as a divine institution.

Not only does he speak of baptism as a grace-bearing sacrament; but he everywhere speaks of the theory of Christianity, out of which infant baptism grew, and became common, as the theory or doctrine which was received from Christ and his apostles.

He endeavored, in the fear of God, and with a heart overflowing with love to Christ, and to the souls of men, to carry out the spirit of the command of our Saviour,—"Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

He viewed baptism as securing an interest in Christ, which those who were baptized could not lose, except by relapsing into sin, and refusing to repent, and rejecting the admonitions of the Church, and thus crucifying the Lord afresh, and putting him to an open shame.

At one time he speaks of a dispute about the time when infants should be baptized. The dispute was not, whether they should be baptized at all. This was not denied; but whether they should not be baptized till the eighth day after birth, according to the analogy between baptism and circumcision. Cyprian maintained that it should be administered as soon as possible.

After speaking of even grievious sins forming no bar—in the case of adults—to their being graciously received in this holy sacrament, he says: "How much less should the infant be debarred, which, being recently born, has not yet sinned at all, save as being naturally born from Adam, it has contracted the contagion of original death, and which is the better prepared more easily to receive the remission of sins, for the very reason that the sins to be remitted are not of itself, but from abroad." Such a thing as denying infant baptism was not thought of; but on the contrary, its importance was argued and urged most strenuously by Cyprian.

Another historic testimony we find in Tertullian, who lived about one hundred and seventy years after the death of Christ, and one hundred and ten after the apostle John.

Tertullian, it is true, opposed infant baptism; but not on the ground that it was not of apostolic origin. This he admitted. Indeed no one dreamed of opposing it on that ground, at that day. Tertullian, however, was the only person during the first several centuries, who advocated exclusive adult baptism; and this position he assumed, as he thought, for reasons of expediency. He had curious notions with regard to baptism; notions that differed from the then existing general opinion on the subject. His opinion was that sins committed after baptism, were much more heinous, and consequently more dangerous, than those committed before baptism—that they were nearly, if not entirely, unpardonable. He viewed baptism as, in some way, securing the remission of sins absolutely and entirely. Hence he advised a delay of baptism to infants and young persons to more mature age, and even to a death-bed. A strange notion this! He offered no objection, however, to infant baptism, as being a new practice, or against the common custom of the Church. This he would have done, most as-

suredly, if there had been room for objecting to it in this way.

His advice, however, was not taken to any great extent, and the common doctrine and practice of baptism continued.

Another testimony is that of Irenæus. Irenæus was the disciple of Polycarp, and Polycarp was the companion of the apostle John.

Irenæus was in the habit of calling baptism regeneration, meaning thereby that actual regeneration followed, or went along with baptism, when the conditions were complied with. In the case of adults, if there was a sincere desire of heart for the remission of sin through Christ, that desire was gratified, through the means of baptism and church-membership. The longing of the soul for redemption was satisfied by embracing Christ in the way which he himself has appointed. In the case of infants, if they would not resist the influence of the Spirit, it would result in their regeneration. With this view, it seems, he says, "Christ came to save those who by him are regenerated (i. e. baptized) unto God; both infants, and little ones, and young men, and elderly persons." He considered baptism to be intended for all ages; hence he was accustomed to say, that Christ became a child to save children; he became a youth to save youth; and he became a man to save us in manhood. If Jesus sanctified the stages of infancy, and youth, and manhood, as his own, it was but the natural promptings of his heart, that led Irenæus to claim for them baptism, as a means of securing the end in view. Infant baptism, aside from any other testimony, springs from the very nature of the Christian salvation, which is designed for all ages and conditions of men.

Another witness on the subject is Augustine, who lived and wrote during the beginning of the fifth century, and

who was intimately acquainted with the theology of his time. Like Origen, he argued the truth of the inherent sinfulness of our nature, from the fact of infant baptism being true. In contending with Pelagius, he said, "That infants are by all Christians acknowledged to stand in need of baptism, which must be in them for original sin, since they have no other." Again, he says: "If they have no sin, why are they accepted to the use of Church baptism? Why are they washed with the laver of regeneration, if they have no defilements?"

Pelagius felt himself sorely embarrassed by this argument, and when charged with inconsistency, he said: "Men slander me, as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants." Further he says: "I never heard of any, not even the most impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants."

Augustine, pressing his opponents on this point, observes: "Since they grant that infants must be baptized, as not being able to resist the authority of the whole Church, which was, beyond doubt, delivered by the Lord and his apostles, they must grant that they need a mediator and have original sin."

The above historic testimony, the witnesses standing in a position which enabled them to know the facts, fully proves infant baptism to have been practiced as far back as the time of the Apostles. But aside from the express declarations of the witnesses of primitive times, the very fact, that it was generally practiced in the second and third centuries, without any one to oppose this practice, except Tertullian, and he only for reasons founded on his own speculations, and not on the ground that it was an innovation, shows it to have sprung from "the apostles' doctrine," and from "the faith once delivered to the saints." To suppose, that such a theory of the Church and of baptism, as is known to have existed only one hundred years after the apostles

were in their graves, to be a new theory, different from that which existed in the beginning of the Christian Church, is to suppose a moral impossibility.

There is not the least shadow of evidence on the pages of history, that any such change took place, and yet such must have been the case, if infant baptism is not true. I repeat, it was impossible for infant baptism, and the corresponding view of its nature, and of the nature of the Church, to come into use, if it did not spring from the doctrine according to godliness. As little could the republican government of the United States have been handed down, by legal succession, from the king of England; and as little could the Revolutionary War have taken place, with its precedents and consequences, within the last three hundred years, and no mention be made of it on the pages of history, by which future generations could judge what had happened; as such a revolution in Christianity could have occurred, leaving behind no evidences of its having taken place.

We have an evidence of the truth of Christianity in the fact, that its founders had no motive to act the impostor. To suppose that Christ and his apostles, with all their self-denials, persecutions, sufferings and deaths before them, would have contended for a falsehood, is to suppose an impossibility. We have a similar evidence for the truth of infant baptism. For, to suppose that the primitive Church should have contended for it as a part of the "faith once delivered to the saints," knowing it not to be such, is morally impossible. But Christianity is true, and infant baptism also is true.

It is indeed admitted, that, in the beginning of the Christian Church, infant baptism was not so general as afterwards. This is owing to the fact, that so many adults were received into the Church from among the heathen, as was necessarily the case in establishing the Church where it had not exist-

ed. And although house-hold baptism was practiced from the beginning, yet it was limited, from the fact, that a man was "set at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes were they of his own household." But when the Church became established, infant baptism became more universal.

3. It is sometimes objected, that there is no Scripture proof for infant baptism. But it must be recollected, that the analogy or agreement of one portion of Scripture with another, and the spirit of Scripture, is of vastly more importance than isolated passages. With this fact in view, we have direct and positive evidence in the New Testament in favor of infant baptism. The evidence is the following.

It is well known, that the Jews were in the habit of receiving their children into the Church by circumcision. Each male child was received when it was eight days old, according to the command of the Lord. The female was constituted a member of the Jewish Church, by the male members of the family being circumcised. When Gentile families were received, they were also, in addition to the former rite, baptized. Such were the customs and usages of the Old Testament Church; and to these customs, with the promise made to Abraham, on which they were founded, Peter alluded in his sermon to the multitude at the outpouring of the Spirit: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sin; for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The Jews were in the habit of receiving their children into the Church by the appointed rite. They were in the habit of considering it as securing to them spiritual blessings to some extent, though these blessings were often abused

and perverted; and it required strong arguments to induce them to give up their accustomed usage of circumcision, when they became Christians. It called forth a severe and protracted controversy, as may be seen from the writings of the Apostles. But if, besides this, they had been required to give up any and every rite, by which their infants could have been recognized, as members of the covenant of Abraham, there would have been a still severer opposition, and a sharper controversy, than that about circumcision. What! deny us the privilege of embracing our children in baptism, which you nevertheless say, secures such great blessings as the promise of the Holy Ghost? If infants had been denied baptism as well as circumcision, the epistles would have been full of controversy on this very point; but, as it is, not a word has been said about it. The Scriptures are silent, and this silence is direct, positive proof for infant baptism.

To this conclusion we come with irresistible necessity. We have been constrained to say thus much, because we deem the subject one of vital importance. Infant baptism, though of divine origin, and a great means of grace, has been abused, and often misunderstood by those who practiced it. On the other hand, it has been opposed, and this opposition, though "a falling away" from "the doctrine of Christ," and the analogy of faith," assumes to be the highest type of Christianity. Alas! that it cannot, or will not, see its error.

We hope in God, that a better day is dawning on the Church and the world, and we shall pray, that the good Lord may hasten it, in its time. We would simply ask the opposers of infant baptism, to look at the proofs in its favor, and beware lest they be found fighting against God. We would ask them to ponder the denunciations of the Saviour against those who offend his "little ones." Are not

the opposers of infant baptism hedging up the way, and preventing the rising generation from coming to Christ, and becoming *his* little ones indeed? We know they do not professedly do this; but do they not practically do it? Do they not neglect the souls of the young? Does not the neglect, as well as the abuse, of infant baptism, result in a wide-spread defection of the children of believing parents, from the Church and from God? Such will be its result sooner or later; because it is a changing of God's order for human inventions; or, at best, a retaining only half the means of grace which are of divine appointment.

The covenant blessings, secured to infants in baptism, undoubtedly often are the means of their regeneration and conversion. The Church, under the Old dispensation, afforded great advantages. How much more does the New, which is superior to the Old? Paul says: "What advantage then hath the Jew, or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God." Much every way—much, both in a social and political respect, under the theocracy; and much in a religious respect: but chiefly, because to them were committed the oracles of God: chiefly, because to them were secured the means of grace—spiritual influences to produce faith. This is more eminently true of the New dispensation, of which baptism is the initiatory and sealing ordinance. And notwithstanding the abuse of infant baptism, its benefits may still be seen by the impartial observer. Even in Baptist churches, it has been noticed, that generally those members, on whom they themselves place most reliance, and in whom they repose the greatest confidence, are persons who were baptized in infancy.

How it can be that baptism can be an advantage to infants, it is not our province to explain. There are a great many things, the cause and mode of which we do not know;

but the fact of which we do know. Thus, for example: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Will not the words of the Saviour apply to those who oppose infant baptism, when he says: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believeth in me," or we might say, whoso shall prevent, or deny all the means of grace to those who might be brought to believe, "it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

The subject, as here presented, is not based on our own reason, nor founded on our own opinions of expediency; but on the conviction, that it is in agreement with the faith of the Church, and with the Holy Scriptures. And though the truth may be rejected, and obscured for a while on this subject, we are persuaded that it will finally triumph. "Truth is mighty and will prevail."

Though our Baptist brethren may smite us down with their pharisaic, but mistaken, zeal, they shall hear our defense, and witness our rising to cast off unjust imputations, and to maintain the truth of Christ and the truth of history; for we have a strong and abiding conviction that if the truth of God is destined to prevail, then that system of religion, of which infant baptism forms a part, is destined to triumph. And in reference to it, we may say:

"Truth crushed to the earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are her's,
While error writhes in pain
And dies amidst her worshippers."

A PRAYER FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

O thou glorious and unchangable Jehovah! who hast revealed thyself in the person of thy incarnate Son, for the purpose of our salvation; and who, in the person and offices of the adorable Redeemer, as well as in thy immutable character, art the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; I adore, love, and praise thee for the manifestation of thy Truth, and I beseech thee, for the sake of Him "who was, and is, and is to come," to guide me into a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

O grant, almighty God! that selfish prejudice, and selfish party spirit may be banished from my mind, and from the minds of all who name thy name, that all may see clearly their duty and act accordingly.

May the abuses of the sacrament of baptism be speedily removed, so that thy word may have free course and be glorified; so that the commands of Him, to whom is given all power in heaven and earth; who is the king eternal, immortal, invisible and only wise God; who is the only absolute and eternal king, being king of kings and lord of lords, may be obeyed, and so that thy people may realize the fulfilment of his words: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." These things I ask for thy name and glory's sake. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

AN ADDRESS TO VERY YOUNG PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED IN INFANCY.

Dear young friends:—You have been baptized with Christian baptism. Your parents, or sponsors, with hearts overflowing with affection for you, and for their Lord, have consecrated you to him, for the purpose of securing your eternal welfare. In this solemn transaction their bosoms were moved with emotions too deep for utterance. They have done that which it was their duty to do. They have done much for you. They have followed you with their prayers, and perhaps with their tears. They have dropped the tear of affection upon your infant cheeks, as you lay unconscious in their arms. They have looked upon you, and their prayers have ascended to heaven in your behalf. But they can do no more. It is for you to say, whether you will harden your hearts, and reject that for which they have consecrated you, and for which they have prayed, namely, the influence of the Spirit, to create you anew in Christ Jesus. It is for you to say, whether you will suffer yourselves to be brought up in the way in which you should go, or whether you will neglect so great salvation as has been provided for you.

Dear young friends! in this solemn sacrament, Jesus, who is ever present in grace and Spirit, comes near and takes you into his arms. His large heart is beating with love toward you. He adopts you as his own children. You belonged to him before; but now the assurance that you are his, is made doubly sure. He takes a special interest in

you; for he says, "He that receiveth such a little child in my name, receiveth me." But do not suppose, that your baptism will save you, if you do not yield yourself to God's control, and to the control of your parents, and to the control of the Church. For he says: "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say." And in another place it is said: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right." And again: "Remember them that are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love, for their work's sake." And again it is said: "Whatsoever the Church shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever the Church shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

If you are baptized, you belong to Christ in an especial manner. You should love, serve, and obey him from the first dawn of your reason. So soon as you know right from wrong, you should pursue the right, and do that which is well-pleasing in the sight of God. Do not suppose, that you are at liberty to sin, because you have not yet been confirmed, and received into full connection with the Church. It is your duty to renounce Satan and all his works, and to repent, and do better day by day, in order that you may live and die happy. You should remember, that Jesus was a child like you, and yet he did no sin, and that it is your duty to be like him as near as possible in goodness; for you have been baptized in his name and for his service. O how great and awful is the sin of refusing to obey the Lord, after you have been so affectionately taken into his arms of mercy! How fearful is the guilt of thus crucifying the Lord afresh and putting him to an open shame! O let me entreat you, in the language of Scripture, "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

You should regulate your conduct by the precepts of God's law. You should search the Scriptures, as they are

set forth in the catechism ; for there the truths are contained, upon the proper understanding and practical influence of which your happiness depends. Remember, that "the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that keep God's law." Use no profane language. Order your conversation in the fear of God. Think how Jesus would speak, were he still present with you in the flesh. Remember the command: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Remember the Saviour's eye is upon you. His ear hears you. "Fear God and keep his commandments, this is the whole duty of man." If you cast off fear, your heart will be hardened, and the Saviour will cast you off. If you deny him, he will deny you also. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Spend this day in a religious way,—in hearing the gospel—in attending Sabbath school, or in reading the Bible and other good books, and in meditation and prayer. Commit to memory the ten commandments, the articles of faith, the Lord's prayer, and the whole catechism, and practice what is there taught. Love Jesus, who came from heaven to save you. Follow his example, and increase in wisdom as you grow in years. Even Jesus, who came from heaven, needed to meditate and pray ; how much more you who have everything to learn? Study your sins, and study your duty. You will one day be called to give an account. Sooner or later, you must appear at the judgment seat of Christ, and then, if you have not done your duty, your condition will be awful indeed.

Moreover, if you harden your heart by a course of sin in your youth, there is great danger that Christ will leave you to yourself in after years. "Remember," therefore, "now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, when the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

A PRAYER FOR A YOUNG PERSON, WHO HAS BEEN BAPTIZED.

O Lord, I have reason to thank thee, that thou hast given me Christian parents, who have watched over me, and cared for me, and given me to thee in baptism. O may not their prayers, and tears be in vain. Lord, I am vile and sinful! I am inclined to do evil, as the sparks are inclined to fly upward. My angry passions have often led me to murmur, and to disobey my dear parents. And thee, O Lord, have I offended. Thy Spirit have I grieved, and my Saviour have I rejected. Have mercy upon me, O Lord; for I have sinned. Draw me from the flames, that would kindle upon me, and suffer me not, I beseech thee, to wander far from thee, as those that perish.

May Jesus be my Saviour. May my faith in him be confirmed. May my soul be renewed, and made like that of my dear Saviour; and may I serve thee in newness of spirit. Help me to consecrate all my time to thy service. If many days should be allotted me in this life, may they be spent for thee; or if few days should be given me, may I not neglect them and lose my soul. Help me now to obey thee. Help me now to love thee, and serve thee, that, when I am taken from this world by the hand of death, I may know thee and serve thee, and grow in grace and knowledge in the world to come. And praises everlasting shall be ascribed to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DUTY OF THE YOUNG TO RECOGNIZE THEIR OBLIGATIONS, AND CONSECRATE THEMSELVES TO GOD.

Presuming that you have felt your obligations to live a holy life from your very infancy, I would remind you that you are yet a sinner, and that what you have been enabled to accomplish, is owing to divine grace. Job, when left to himself, being deprived of the protecting hand of Jehovah, and left to the mercy of Satan, to be tempted by him, murmured against his God. Peter, when tempted by Satan and his own wicked heart, denied his Lord; and even went so far as to become guilty of using profane language. His protestations to the Saviour: "Though all shall be offended, yet will not I," and "If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise," became a rope of sand. Alas! has not this, in effect, been the case with you? Have you not often murmured against the ways of Jehovah? Have you not often denied your Saviour, and in effect acted and felt, as if you were under no obligations to him? Too true is it, that you have been guilty, and that you have cause, like Peter, to weep the bitter tears of repentance. But the mercy of God alone is your refuge. It is this alone, that can cover your remaining sins and infirmities. The righteousness of Christ alone, is your plea for acceptance before God. The one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross, alone is the price of your salvation.

But I would call your attention, with all the solemnity I am capable of, to the fact, that this righteousness, and this

sacrifice, to become yours, involves a progressive obedience on your part. "For it is impossible, that those who are ingrafted into Christ, should not bring forth the fruits of thankfulness." It is the design of the Christian salvation, that those who are baptized, should bring forth the fruits of a truly religious life. In order, therefore, that you may have your fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life for yourself; and in order that you may be instrumental in carrying forward the work of God, in the salvation of others, it is necessary, that, when you arrive at years of sufficient understanding, you should take upon yourself the vows made by your parents or sponsors, in your behalf, at your baptism, and become a member of the Church in full connection. If you are not willing to do this, your baptism will be of no avail to you; for, it is a proof that you have entirely rejected the influence of the Spirit, and have thus, so far at least, received the grace of God in vain.

By baptism, you have been, to some extent, ingrafted into Christ. You have been brought within those influences, which are calculated in their nature to nourish you into spiritual life. You have been brought into a special relation to Christ, and the promise of God, that he would be nearer to you, than he otherwise would have been, is secured to you. To you the Saviour comes first, as he came first to the Jews, and says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." To you his ministers come first, as the Apostles were commanded first to preach the gospel in Judea, and when the Jews would not hear, then only to turn to the Gentiles. You have had the blessings of the gospel brought within your reach; but if you reject them, your privileges will be useless. You have been given to Christ in baptism, and your salvation is secured, if you will accept the grace that is offered.

And not only is life offered you; but you are under the

most solemn and pressing obligations to take up your cross and follow Christ. You have been brought to the vestibule of the Church; but it is for you to say, whether you will go from the Church into the world. It is for you to say, whether you will walk away from Israel's gentle shepherd, who has taken you as a lamb, into his arms. It is for you to say, whether you will walk away, as a prodigal son, from your father's house. No doubt you have already done so, to some extent; but let me entreat you to return. Let me entreat you, not to remain a moment in the haunts of sin, or the paths of vice. Resolve immediately: "I will arise and go to my father, and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, receive me as one of thy hired servants." Delay not a moment the time of your return; but upon the first opportunity, seek to identify yourself with the people of God, by your own act.

To urge you to this step, let me remind you, that God did not establish his Church in vain, or that it should be treated with neglect. For, upon the Church, he has hung the most precious hopes of the world. In the Church he has placed those means, which are designed for the edification of its members, and without which, those persons who have been baptized, become branches which bear no fruit, and are taken away. They have been ingrafted; but they have not received the sap of the vine, which is Christ. They have been planted in the likeness of Christ's death; but they do not rise in newness of life. They have been brought, some distance, on their way from the Egypt of sin; but they refuse to go any further, and will rather die in the wilderness, than advance to the promised land. But as the Lord commanded Moses, saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward," so he commands you, "Go forward." You have no security for your soul

but in going forward. You are surrounded by many enemies.

Behold Satan, the adversary of your soul, seeking your destruction! If you are left under his power, you must fall. He will entice you. He will seem to be your friend. He will decoy you, and lead you into a deceitful security—a security in sin. He will control your thoughts and your will, and you will be led a willing captive by him wherever he may lead you. May the Lord save you from his power! Behold your own deceitful heart, how it prompts you to wickedness; how it urges you to cast off fear and restrain prayer; how it suggests doubts, and strengthens unbelief. It is the heart and Satan, that suggest the wicked thought, expressed in Malachi: "It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" The heart is utterly deceitful, and desperately wicked, who can know it? May the Lord save you from your own heart!

Behold the world, with its enticing allurements, seeking to drown men in perdition. It pleads for sinful amusements. It beckons to you to come and go in the way of evil men. It promises you the most delightful pleasures. It ever stands ready to engulph the unwary in the meshes of wickedness. Evil men grow worse and worse. May the good Lord save you from the evil influences of this world!

Dear young friends, do you not fear all these enemies? If you do not, it is an evidence, that you have already wandered far from Christ. It is an evidence, that you have grieved him, and that he has left you to the influence of your own ways. But he still calls upon you to stop, and return. By his ministers—by his Church—by your parents—and by the Holy Spirit, he calls upon you to return. Think upon your sins. Think upon your miseries, in this world and in the next, if you refuse to obey your Lord. Think

upon the hour of dissolution, when all that is in this world, will have an end to you—when you can no more expect to take pleasure in the prospects before you in this life—when you must look into eternity, and feel that you must now enter it. Think of the fact, that none but an almighty Saviour can help you then. As you value your own soul, therefore, fly to the extended arms of Jesus. Be willing to be led by him, and be willing to serve him in the way which he has prescribed.

A PRAYER FOR A YOUNG PERSON IN VIEW OF HIS RELATION TO THE CHURCH.

O Lord, I approach thee with the deepest reverence. I am amazed and confounded in view of thy terrible majesty; for I have sinned against thee; against thee and thee only have I done evil in thy sight. I have not only disobeyed my loving parents and friends; I have not only rejected and despised the tender sympathies and solicitude of those who have been interested in my behalf; I have not only rejected the supplications and tears of those who cared for my soul; I have not only done violence to those affectionate friends, whose entreaties and admonitions were as chords around my heart; but I have broken away from thee, my heavenly Father, who hast loved me with an unutterable love; a love stronger than death; a love that prompted the sacrifice of thine only begotten Son upon the cross.

I have pursued the pleasures of sin; but I awake and find myself miserable I am without God and without hope in the world, and in the future, misery everlasting is my portion, if thou dost not redeem me. O God, have mercy upon me. Thou knowest the language of my heart. From the depths do I cry unto thee. I feel that thou art just and holy and good; and though thou shouldst condemn me to everlasting pains, I could not but feel humbled, and cry for mercy. Thy mercy! thy sweet mercy! may it be extended to me. Am I not assured from thy word: "The sacrifi-

ces of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart, O Lord, thou wilt not despise." Lord, if my heart is not sufficiently broken, break it still more. Soften it, that it may be sensible of its need, and sensible of thy mercy.

And now Lord, help me to turn my eyes to the Church. May I find there the home of my spirit. May I have a hungering and thirsting after the righteousness there revealed. And if I have wandered in heart from thy house of prayer—which I confess, with deep humiliation I have— may I now retrace my steps. May I now begin to return. May I delight to tread thy courts as in former days, and may I follow in the footsteps of those who have gone to their reward. O Lord, I trust I experience a sincere desire for the bread of life. I trust I feel that I have a famishing soul. Do thou convey me, by thy grace, to the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Do thou lead me to the land of uprightness, that I may be blessed with the provisions of thy heavenly bounty. May those sweet sounds that once so enraptured and charmed my soul, again salute my ear. May I be permitted to enter, with thy people, within the gates of Zion, and worship toward thy holy hill in spirit and in truth. Lord, if thou wilt vouchsafe these blessings to me, the praise shall be thine throughout all ages—world without end. Amen.

CHAPTER V.

A CALL TO THOSE WHO HAVE NOT BEEN BAPTIZED.

"*Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*" *Acts* 22: 16.

BAPTISM, as applied to infants, is intended to be a means of producing faith, or the new birth in them; and it will produce this result, if the parents are faithful, and the blessing of God is bestowed.

Baptism, as applied to persons who have come to years of personal responsibility, is intended to seal, make certain, or secure that, which their faith takes hold of; and also besides this, to be the door of entrance into the Church, in which they are introduced to the other means of grace, for their edification, and for the conversion of others. Although it is not God's ordinary method of procedure to convert those only, who grow up without having been baptized in infancy, but the contrary; and although he does ordinarily chiefly convert the children of believing parents, in connection with their use of all the means in their power; and although it is not generally the case, that those are converted who live during their youth without considering their obligations to God, or those who grow old in sin and are hardened in their crimes; yet there is hope for the chief of sinners. It is, alas! too true, that many of the children of the Church, who were baptized in their infancy, never become converted. But this is owing either to erroneous views on the subject; or, in some cases, to the fact that parents do not follow up baptism with their advice, instruction

and example; or, to the prevalence of false doctrines in the community, and to the wickedness of those who are baptized, in refusing to be instructed. It is, alas, only too true, that we may sometimes speak in vain to the children of the Church. But whether such be the case or not, we will not neglect others; or, if it even be so, then especially will we turn to those who are beyond the pale of the visible Church. Perhaps God may, to reprove his people, reverse, for a time, his general order. Perhaps he may deal with us, as he did with his ancient people, the Jews, and say: "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own thoughts—which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day."

As we are to be no respecters of persons, except as God respects them; and as we are to leave no means untried, which God, by his word and providence, has indicated, that we should use, for the conversion of any, we turn our attention, for a moment, to those who are, as yet, unbaptized.

Dear reader, if ever you are saved, it will be by the grace and life going forth from the Church, and if ever you receive the grace and life of our Lord Jesus Christ, you will be willing to be baptized, and unite with the Church. You will be willing to submit to the conditions of church-membership. This will be an infallible test of your sincerity; for God's people are willing in the day of his power; and he has constituted his Church to be the channel of salvation, and the means of edification to his people. The Saviour said: If any man "will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican." If you would be saved, therefore, you must listen to her voice; you must partake of her communion; you must receive from her, and impart

to her; you must become one with her. A branch cannot live and thrive, except it abide in the vine. Christ, the true vine, exists, lives, and redeems in the Church. I would, by no means, however, leave you to suppose, that a mere outward connection with the Church, by baptism, will save you. Let me urge you, therefore, to consider the plan of redemption.

1. Consider your sins. The first thing necessary for you to know, is the greatness of your sins and miseries. It is against the great God you have sinned. He designed you for obedience and holiness; but you yield yourself to a course of sin. As God, against whom you have sinned, is infinitely great, so your sins have reached an incalculably great magnitude. The punishments which he will inflict upon you, if you die in your impenitence, will be inconceivably great.

You are under the dominion of sin. You have a law of sin in your members, and unless the dominion of sin is broken, you will continue to sin forever. Unless the law of sin and death is destroyed, you will die the death eternal. When you seek, therefore, for the happiness of heaven, come with a view to have your sins removed. Come with a desire to have God's anger turned away. Come with a purpose of living a life of piety; a life of faith and prayer, a life of holiness, ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well more and more. Count the cost of coming to Christ.

2. Consider the importance of accepting salvation on the terms on which it is offered.

Christ offers himself as your righteousness and sanctification, and redemption. Yea, he commands you to seek the salvation of your soul upon the terms of the gospel. He says: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent, and be baptized, every one of you. Repent, and believe the gospel." Christ is your righteousness. He

alone has the spotless purity which God will accept as an atonement for sin. He alone has satisfied divine justice, by his death on the cross, in your stead. You must not come with the idea of purchasing salvation by your works. You must not suppose, that, by submitting to painful bodily exercises, you can thereby merit salvation. "Bodily exercise profiteth little." The same is true of painful mental exercises. God will not despise a broken heart; but still that is not your righteousness. Christ is your righteousness.

> "The best obedience of your hands,
> Dares not appear before his throne.
> But faith can answer God's demands,
> By pleading what your Lord has done."

But, in accepting the gospel, you must not forget, that Christ must be received into your soul as the power of a new life. You are to perform good works out of gratitude for your deliverance, and by the assistance of your Saviour. You are to persevere in every good word and work. You are to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, because God works in you to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Study the method of grace, as it is contained in the word of God and set forth in the catechism, and other evangelical books, until you understand the doctrines of divine grace in the saving of your soul. But do not pry into useless questions. Do not expect to understand every portion of Scripture, every act of providence, and God's way of salvation, at once. In their very nature, the great truths of religion cannot be fully understood by finite minds. No one, by searching, can find out God to perfection. Have faith in what is revealed, and then you will understand more and more. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether it be of men." "Then shall you know, if you follow on to know the Lord."

Alas! it is only too true, that many reject the gospel, because it does not meet their notions in an unconverted state. They are unwilling to confess and forsake their sins. They are unwilling to ask God's help. They are unwilling to pray for the grace of his Holy Spirit. Darkness and doubt hang over their minds. They love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Behold on the brink of ruin, the young, the gay and thoughtless, sporting, and dancing, and enjoying themselves in the pleasures of youth. Their hearts seem to cheer them with the spontaneous gushings of youthful emotions, while the language of their conduct is: "Away from me with religion. Away from me with prayer. Away from me with the Bible. Away from me with the catechism and religious books. Do not ask me to study religion. Let me enjoy myself, while I am young." Then turning away, behold them eagerly plunging into the whirling stream of vain amusement, drinking the flowing bowl, or feasting their appetites to gluttony, or nibbling at some poor miserable, sensual enjoyment, as if it were the "*highest good;*" or, perhaps, rushing into some exciting play, as if there were nothing so blessed in the world as *sport*. But the brink of ruin is near. Round and round, they make their giddy circle, when suddenly their foot goes over the brink. They are gone! O God, help! Lift them up, or they sink. They are gone! They sink to rise no more. O you, who still remain, take warning. Let not Satan lead you captive at his will. Fly to Jesus. Stretch forth your arms to him. Jesus alone can save you.

Dear reader, come not to the Bible, nor to religious books, nor to the preaching of the gospel, with that proud, self-complacent, and self-sufficient spirit, which characterizes those, who will not have Christ to reign over them. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, and he will exalt you in due time."

The plan of salvation through Christ, applied by the means of grace in the Church, admits of no doubt. It is so plainly revealed, that he that runs may read it. But the first step you make in the way to heaven, must be the exercise of a true humility. "He that will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." Come with that confiding trust, which a little child exercises in its parent, and your baptism will be, in effect, infant baptism. It will receive the signature of your Saviour, and he will stamp his image on your heart. The grace of the Holy Spirit will be poured on your soul, and you will be able to rejoice in God your Saviour.

A PRAYER AND REFLECTIONS FOR ONE COMING TO THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

Almighty God, the Creator of all things, the fountain of purity, the source of light and life, God over all, blessed forevermore: With unfeigned humility would I attempt to approach thee. I would come with fear and trembling; for thou hast spoken in terror to my soul. Thy "word is quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, joint and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." And were it not for the words of mercy blended with the word of justice, I would not, I could not dare to lift up my head, and direct my prayer to thee. But thou hast prepared a ransom. The joyful sound of salvation is proclaimed from thy holy hill of Zion: The Spirit and the bride say come.

Lord, may I presume to come and take thy yoke upon me? Am I prepared to confess thy name before the world? Lord, the preparation of the heart, and the answer of the tongue, in man, is from thee. To thee I am come for help. O send help from the sanctuary. Have mercy upon me in my low estate. Give me a token for good, that I may not run before I am sent; that I may not

present my body to thee, while my heart is far from thee. Lord, in my helpless condition, I fly to thee. Save me from my sins. Save me from perdition. May I honestly and sincerely dedicate myself to thy service. May the baptism of the Holy Ghost be poured upon me. May the washing of regeneration create me anew in Christ Jesus. May I not be an unfruitful branch. May I not have a name to live and be dead; but speak thou the word, and I shall live; I shall be saved and eventually crowned with immortality. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake, and the glory shall be thine forever. Amen.

CHAPTER VI.

AN ADDRESS TO CATECHUMENS, OR PERSONS STUDYING THE CATECHISM, WITH A VIEW OF JOINING THE CHURCH BY CONFIRMATION.

PRESUMING that you are convinced of the importance of church-membership, I will proceed to speak of the position and duties of catechumens, or candidates for church-membership. And to induce you to occupy the position of a catechumen, I will urge upon your attention a few solemn considerations connected with your welfare as an immortal being. Perhaps you have lost some of your kindred by death. Perhaps you have followed a father or mother, or a brother or sister to the grave. If so, you ought not to hesitate a moment in seeking the preparation required to follow them. Strive, then, to enter in at the narrow gate, that you may be accepted by the friend of sinners.

1. In the first place, when you attend the lectures of a minister on the catechism, try to regard your minister as an ambassador of Jesus Christ; try to look upon him as a channel of divine influence; try to have faith in him as a man of God. Esteem him very highly in love for his work's sake. He may be imperfect; for he is a man of like passions with yourselves. But still, though he be an earthen vessel, the treasure of religious teaching is entrusted to him. The office of leading you into green pastures beside the still waters of salvation, is committed to his hands. Follow his directions, therefore, and he will lead you to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

2. In the second place, study the catechism as thoroughly as possible. If possible, commit it all to memory, together with the Scripture proofs. The catechism is all taken from the Bible. To study it, therefore, is to study the Scriptures. You will find, that, after you have studied hard to understand some particular doctrine, by the use of your own reason, without coming to any satisfactory conclusion, when you look at the explanation given of it in the catechism, it becomes plain enough; you are at once brought to a settled opinion. Many persons go astray, because they follow too exclusively their own reasoning, instead of receiving the simple truth, as it is revealed in the Scriptures, and expressed in the catechism.

But do not merely commit the catechism to memory. Try to understand its meaning also. Especially try to understand its spiritual import. Study it with a prayerful mind; and, in the stillness of your private hours, lift your heart to God for his blessing. And when you sit down to hear the words of your pastor, listen with a devotional frame of mind. A great deal of harm has been done to individuals, by their not attending to this duty properly. They have merely gone over the catechism, without having their consciences exercised, and their hearts touched. They have not prayed for the blessing of God upon their souls. Many have thus been lost, and the cause of Christ has thus been injured. Catechizing is good, if properly attended to; but if not thus attended to, it will harden the heart, and leave the soul to perish. Catechizing, if rightly conducted, may be regarded in the light of a prayer meeting, and that of the most interesting kind. The pastor meets with you to expound the Scriptures, and to sing and pray with you. If you really desire to be saved, and are penitent on account of your sins, there is no means that can be conceived of, which is better calculated than this, to enable you to be-

come prepared for church-membership. But take heed that you be not careless. A fearful responsibility rests upon you.

3. Pray to God in private for a blessing. The expressive language of our Saviour is: "Enter into thy closet, and shut to thy door, and pray to the Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall himself reward thee openly." So plainly indeed is this duty inculcated by our Lord, that it would seem, but a hint is needed to urge ou to its performance. I well remember my venerated pastor, who always advised his pupils to pray. He was in the habit of saying a few words about secret prayer to his catechumens, at the conclusion of his catechetical exercises. They afterwards thanked him very greatly in their hearts for his advice.

When you come to be examined before the consistory, for admission into the church by confirmation, the question may be asked you: Have you been in the habit of praying? How important, that you should be able to answer in the affirmative! When you come to stand before the bar of God, the same question may be asked you. How important, that you should then especially be able also to answer in the affirmative! For it is said: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved." "He that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

A PRAYER FOR A CATECHUMEN.

Lord, I thank thee, that, amidst the darkness of this world; amidst the uncertainties which hang over the future world, thou hast caused a light to arise, to illuminate my pathway through this valley of tears; and that amidst the fading nature of the objects of this life, I am enabled to look to the eternal mansions.

Lord, I am admonished that I am a stranger and pilgrim in the earth, and that I am a traveller to eternity. The death of my fellow beings fills my soul with awe and solemnity. May I betake myself to the work of preparation for death and eternity. May I be enabled to enter into thy kingdom here, in order that I may be embraced in thy kingdom hereafter. May I be enabled to understand the things of the Spirit, and see the narrow way to heaven, in which I should walk. To this end, give me a reverence for holy things, and produce that spirit of meekness in me, by which I can receive the ingrafted word, which is able to save my soul.

Enable me to regard thy servant as thy ambassador; knowing, that what he shall do and say, according to thy word, will be sanctioned in heaven. Lord, do thou cause thy Spirit to accompany his words, that he may speak in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. May I not be an unfruitful hearer. May thy word be sweet unto my taste. May I delight in it as in a hidden treasure. May I comprehend with all saints, the length and breadth, and heighth and depth, of revealed truth; and may I know the love of God, which passeth knowledge. Do thou be pleased to hear my supplications for a blessing upon my soul. Do thou help me to pray. May thy good Spirit prompt my petitions, that my prayer may be acceptable.

Hear me, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus my Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

Or the following:

"O eternal God, fountain of truth, in whom to believe is everlasting life, let thy grace descend with mighty power upon my soul. Inspire me with wisdom, knowledge and humility; and so sanctify my belief in thy revelations, that my heart may be filled with hope and confidence in thy gracious promises.

Restrain, O Lord, every vain imagination, and bring every proud thought into subjection to thy will, that no prejudice, no motive of self-interest may interfere with my full belief in the pure doctrines of Christianity.

Hear me, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father, &c."

CHAPTER VII.

CONFIRMATION.

THE ceremony of confirmation, though not a sacrament, is nevertheless a scriptural ordinance. It is an appropriate rite, by which the person who has been baptized, is received into full connection with the Church. It grows forth from the idea of baptism as a sacrament, which secures a right and title to the inheritance purchased by Christ. When officers in the Church, in the time of the Apostles, were ordained, the ceremony was performed by laying on of hands. When, at one time, the Apostles laid their hands on some persons, who had been baptized, they received the Holy Ghost. So in confirmation, persons who have properly attended to catechetical instruction, and have prayed, and are penitent and desirous to be saved, receive an additional sealing influence of the Spirit. They receive, while they thus faithfully, and not merely in an outward, formal way, join the Church, a joy and peace which the world cannot give, nor take away. This is the experience of thousands, who have been confirmed in this way.

The ceremony of confirmation, is, as it were, the completion of baptism. In it the subject takes upon himself the vows made in his behalf in baptism, and publicly professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me remind the catechumen, therefore, of the importance of the step he is taking. Be sure that you are thoroughly prepared for it; that you understand the doctrines of the gospel, and that you are properly impressed with the importance of church-

membership, and of leading a pious life. If you are not penitent; if your heart is not, in some degree, subdued and humbled in view of your sins, you are not qualified to take this step. You had better ask your pastor to postpone administering to you confirmation until the next communion season, whilst you continue to seek a more intimate acquaintance with God your Saviour. You ought to be ready now to make a profession of religion. It is owing to your negligence and unfaithfulness, perhaps, that you are not prepared to enter the Church at this time; and this fact ought to bring you to immediate repentance. You ought, this moment, to repent of your sin of neglect.

But supposing you to be ready to take up your cross, in submitting to confirmation, I would give you some advice as to the manner in which you should make a dedication of yourself to God.

1. Do it deliberately. You should have fully before your mind, all your responsibilities. You should have a clear view of the nature of your undertaking. You should understand what you are doing. You should not do, what you are about to engage in, carelessly, or rashly, like the horse rushing into battle. Deliberate upon the course before you; not, however, with a slavish fear or dread; but with an open heart and filial affection; and then, in humble reliance on God, present yourself to him. Let not your mind be distracted by other things. Think only of God, and do what you do, as unto the Lord, and not unto men.

2. Dedicate yourself to God cheerfully. Let it be "not by constraint, but willingly." You should love God, because he first loved you; and if you love Christ, you will cordially commit yourself to him. How cheerfully should you surrender yourself to God, who has done so much for you! He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. He has created and sustained you. He has kept you in being

during your infancy, and brought you thus far in the journey of life, preserving you from many lurking dangers and open foes. But above all, he has given you a Saviour, Jesus, who is willing to save you from misery everlasting; a Saviour who has purchased you with his own blood; who has paid the price of your redemption, with inconceivably great agony on the cross, and who now offers you life eternal. Do not engage in this act against your will. Do not give yourself and your service to the Lord grudgingly. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Say,

> "Here Lord, I give myself away,
> 'Tis all that I can do."

3. Let your dedication to God be entire. "You are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and spirit, which are God's." "All you are, and all you have, and all you can do, your time, your possessions, your influence over others, should be devoted to him, that, for the future, it may be employed for him, and to his glory. You should desire to keep nothing back from him, but seriously judge that you are then in the truest and noblest sense your own, when you are most entirely his." Do not retain the practice of any one known sin, but be willing and desirous to forsake every sinful indulgence—every act, and thought and feeling that God does not approve. If you regard iniquity in your heart, the Lord will not hear your prayer—will not accept your dedication of yourself to his service. He will have the whole will, and mind, and strength.

4. To enable you to approach the Lord in the rite of confirmation, with the greater solemnity, I will here submit to you a form of dedication, written by the Rev. Dr. Doddridge. Or you may, if you prefer, write one for yourself, in which you may record your feelings and your purposes, on this great and solemn occasion; to which you may afterwards

refer, and reflect upon it, for your spiritual benefit. "Set your hand and seal to it, that on such a day, of such a month and year, and at such a place, on full consideration, and serious reflection, you came to this happy resolution, that, whatsoever others might do, you would serve the Lord."

"Eternal and ever blessed God! I desire to present myself before thee, with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul, sensible how unworthy such a sinful worm is, to appear before the holy Majesty of heaven, and especially on such an occasion as this, even to dedicate myself, without reserve, to thee. But the scheme and plan is thine own. Thine infinite condescension hath offered it by thy Son, and thy grace hath inclined my heart to accept of it.

"I come, therefore, acknowledging myself to have been a great offender; smiting upon my breast, and saying with the publican, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' I come, invited by the name of thy Son, and wholly trusting in his perfect righteousness, entreating that for his sake thou wilt be merciful to my unrighteousness, and wilt no more remember my sins. Receive, I beseech thee, thy revolted creature, who is now convinced of thy right to him, and desires nothing so much as that he may be thine.

"This day do I, with the utmost solemnity, surrender myself to thee. I renounce all former lords that have had dominion over me; and I consecrate to thee all that I am and all that I have: the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my worldly possessions, my time, and my influence over others; to be all used entirely to thy glory, and resolutely employed in obedience to thy commands, as long as thou continuest me in life; with an ardent desire and humble resolution to continue thine through all the endless ages of eternity; ever holding myself in an attentive posture to observe the first intimations of thy will, and ready

to spring forward with zeal and joy to the immediate execution of it.

"To thy direction also I resign myself, and all I am and have, to be disposed of by thee in such a manner as thou shalt, in thine infinite wisdom, judge most subservient to the purposes of thy glory. To thee I leave the management of all events, and say without reserve, 'Not my will, but thine be done,' rejoicing with a loyal heart, in thine unlimited government, as what ought to be the delight of the whole rational creation.

"Use me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as an instrument of thy service! Number me among thy peculiar people! Let me be washed in the blood of thy dear Son! Let me be clothed in his righteousness! Let me be sanctified by his Spirit! Transform me more and more into his image! Impart to me, through him, all needful influences of thy purifying, cheering, and comforting Spirit! And let my life be spent under those influences, and in the light of thy gracious countenance, as my Father, and my God!

"And when the solemn hour of death comes, may I remember thy COVENANT, 'well ordered in all things and sure,' as all my salvation, and all my desire, though every hope and enjoyment is perishing; and do thou, O Lord! remember it too. Look down with pity, O my heavenly Father, on thy languishing dying child! Embrace me in thine everlasting arms! Put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive it to the abodes of them that sleep in Jesus, peacefully and joyfully to wait the accomplishment of thy great promise to all thy people, even that of a glorious resurrection, and of eternal happiness in thine heavenly presence!

"And if any surviving friend should, when I am in the dust, meet with this memorial of my solemn transactions with thee, may he make the engagement his own; and do

thou graciously admit him to partake in all the blessings of THY COVENANT, through Jesus, the great Mediator of it, to whom, with thee, O Father, and thy Holy Spirit, be everlasting praises ascribed, by all the millions who are thus saved by thee, and by all those other celestial spirits in whose work and blessedness thou shalt call them to share ! Amen."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"*Do this in remembrance of me.*"

PRESUMING that you have fully committed yourself to be Christ's servant forever, I will endeavor to aid you in coming to the Lord's table. It is presumed, that you have studied the subject of the Lord's Supper in the catechism, and that you understand the nature and design of this institution. Permit me to urge you to keep in view, what you have there learned, so that when you approach the table of the Lord, the sight of your eyes may affect your heart. Come not in a thoughtless and careless manner to this holy ordinance. Let deep repentance possess your soul. Remember that they, who eat and drink unworthily, eat and drink damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body. Presume not to trifle with holy things, least of all with the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is the highest and most expressive form of the mystery of redemption, which we are permitted to behold on this side of heaven. It is the most vital and active part of religious worship. It is the most powerful means of grace by which our souls are to be purified and saved.

If you have been negligent in any part of your duty heretofore, in the way of preparing yourself for an approach to the Lord's Supper, begin now to repent and pray in earnest,—begin now to examine the ground of your hope,—begin now to search your heart. If you fail of a blessing here, you will probably fail entirely. It is hoped, however, that

you have not been altogether negligent. Still, let the thought sink deep into your heart, that, if you have not a true sorrow for sin, and a true hungering and thirsting after righteousness; if you have not thought long, seriously, and earnestly of your sins, and called upon God, in earnest supplications, for his blessing, for pardon, peace and life, you will fail of obtaining that, which you most of all desire. Repent, therefore, and do your first works; do that which you should have done at the beginning.

I make these remarks, because the Lord's Supper has so often been abused by the careless and thoughtless manner in which persons have partaken of the emblems of Christ's body and blood. Christ and his cause have thus been injured—wounded in the most tender part. The very central part of Christian worship, which is the means of lifting the soul up to God, is thus robbed of its power, and turned into a mere shadow. The holiest of holies is thus entered by defiled hands and polluted. The pearl of great price is thus plucked, by ruthless hands, from its place, and trampled in the dust. But God lives and will vindicate his honor.

This abuse is seen in the subsequent lives of some, who have partaken of the Supper of the Lord; for a tree is known by its fruits. Persons, who, seemingly, had the qualifications necessary for a worthy approach to the Lord's table, have turned out to be destitute of true religion. The utmost care of the Church to guard against this result, has not been able to prevent such occurrences. Still, it is the duty of the Church to warn the people, and to suspend from the communion, those who do not show evidence of being worthy. But, as the Church is to judge only by outward evidences, abuses cannot be entirely prevented. The tares and the wheat must grow together until the time of the harvest. It is, therefore, only the more necessary for each one to judge himself, that he be not condemned with the world.

After you have attended to the duty of self-examination, two things, with regard to the nature and design of this ordinance, must be kept in view.

1. The first is the sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross. This is vividly represented by the emblems before you in this sacrament; and as you view them, your thoughts will recur to the events which they typify. You will recall your sins vividly to mind, and the sweet assurance will arise in your heart, that his body was offered and broken on the cross for you, and his blood was shed for you. Your soul will be melted by the remembrance of Calvary and Golgotha, and the love of your dying Redeemer. Your heart will be subdued, and every thought be brought into subjection to Christ, in view of the deep significancy of this solemn transaction; and you will feel the force of the language of the poet, when he says:

"And did the holy and the just,
The sov'reign of the skies,
Stoop down to wretchedness and dust,
That guilty worms might rise?

Yes! the Redeemer in his soul
Sustained the pains of hell;
The wrath of God without control,
On him our surety fell."

And well may you exclaim in language like the following:

"O for such love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break,
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak."

2. Bear in mind, in the second place, that, in order that you may "embrace with a believing heart, all the sufferings of Christ, and thereby obtain the pardon of sin, and life eternal," you must "become more and more united to Christ's sacred body, by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ

and in you." In order that you may receive the righteousness of Christ, you must be the recipient of the life of Christ; that life which dwells in Christ's body in heaven, and transcends the limits of space, and flows over to you through the means of grace, and is strengthened and increased more and more through the medium of the Lord's Supper, when properly used. Keep in mind, that in proportion as you have a hungering faith for Christ as your justifier, and in Christ as your sanctifier, will you be justified and absolved; in proportion as you have a hungering faith for Christ, as your redemption, resurrection, or eternal life, will you be benefitted; in proportion as you have a hungering faith for holiness, and for Christ's Spirit, or life, will you become holy. But, "if you receive not the Spirit of Christ, you are none of his."

Remember, therefore, as you eat this bread and drink this wine, that, although Christ is in heaven, and you on earth, you are, nevertheless, partakers of his life—of his grace and Spirit—that life, or grace and Spirit, which dwells in his body, and that this is communicated to you more and more through the medium of the Supper. As you taste the bread and wine, remember Jesus as a present Saviour, who is willing to communicate himself to you, in the pardon of your sins, and in the strengthening of your inward life.

These are the two things which you should keep in view, as you approach the table of the Lord. They cannot be separated. You cannot possess one without the other. You cannot be justified unless you are regenerated, and being regenerated, you cannot keep your inward life of faith active, unless you receive the communication of Christ's grace in the holy Supper. The atonement of Christ is typified in the broken bread, and poured out wine; but it cannot be counted yours unless you receive also by faith, the very life of Christ, by the power of which your soul shall be re-

newed, and ultimately your body also raised up at the last day, to glory and immortality.

With these two truths fully in view, as a guide to your faith, you may meditate on all the privileges and glories of the Christian. You may meditate on your lost estate—on the blindness which enveloped your mind until lately—and on your recovery from the curse of sin, and from a course of sinning, by the mercy of God. These are solemn facts; for it is due to sovereign grace alone, that you now have any hope, or any desire for eternal life. You are still in a world of sin, and your heart is subject to doubt and difficulty. With shame and confusion of face too great to be expressed, you now come before the Lord, and the Lord knows whether you have that deep inward compunction, which follows a faithful self-examination, or not. If you have, it is your privilege to look up and see a bleeding Saviour—see the love that beams in his eye, and flows from his soul—see, as it were, his wounds, and his blood trickling down from his pierced hands, and side, and feet. If you are penitent, it is for you the Saviour died. If you are a Christian, it is for you the Lord's Supper is designed. If you love Christ in sincerity, and can say with Peter, "Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee;" you are welcome at his banquet. If you have a godly sorrow which worketh a repentance unto salvation, that needs not to be repented of, you are invited to a seat among his people. Come, then, with pious and devout affections, and obey the dying command of your Redeemer: "Do this in remembrance of me."

To aid you further, in your approach to the Lord's table, permit me to quote from the Rev. Matthew Henry:

"Wonderful sights are to be seen here, where the Lord's death is shown forth: precious benefits are here to be had, where the covenant of grace is sealed: the transaction is very solemn, very serious, nothing more so on this side

death! But what impressions must be made hereby upon our souls? How must we stand affected while this is doing? Is this service only a show, at which we may be unconcerned spectators? Or is it a market-place, in which we may stand all the day idle? No, by no means: here is work to be done, heart-work, such as requires very close application of mind, and a great liveliness and vigor of spirit, and in which all that is within us should be employed, and all little enough.

Here is that to be done, which calls for fixed thoughts and warm affections, which needs them and well deserves them. What sensible movings of affection we should aim at, is not so easy to direct; tempers vary; some are soon moved and much moved with every thing that affects them; from such it may be expected that their passions, which are strong at other times, should not be weak at this ordinance; and yet, no doubt there are others whose natural temper is happily more calm and sedate, who are not conscious to themselves of such stirring of affections as some experience at this ordinance, and yet have as comfortable communion with God, as good evidence of the truth and growth of grace, and as much real benefit by the ordinance, as those that think themselves even transported by it. The deepest rivers are scarce perceived to move, and make the least noise. On the other hand, there may be much heat where there is little light, and strong passions where there are very weak resolutions. Like the waters of a land flood—which make a great show, but are shallow and soon gone. We must not, therefore, build a good opinion of our spiritual state upon the vehemence of our affections.

A romance may represent a tragical story so pathetically, as to make a great impression upon the minds of some, who yet know the whole matter to be both feigned and foreign; bodily exercise—if that be all—profits little. And on the

other hand, there may be a true and strong faith, informing the judgment, bowing the will, and commanding the affections, and purifying the heart and life, where yet there are not any transports, or pathetical expressions. There may be true joy, where the mouth is not filled with laughter, nor the tongue with singing: and true sorrow where yet the eye doth not run down with tears.

They whose hearts are firmly fixed for God, may take the comfort of that, though they do not find their hearts flowing out sensibly towards him.

And yet in this sacrament, where it is designed that the eye should affect the heart, we must not rest in the bare contemplation of what is here set before us; but the consideration thereof must make an impression on our spirits, which should be turned as wax to the seal. If what is here done do not affect us for the present, it will not be likely to influence us afterwards: for we retain the remembrance of things better by our affections, than by our notions: 'I shall never forget thy precepts, when by them thou hast quickened me.' Here, therefore, let us stir up the gift that is in us, endeavoring to affect ourselves with the great things of God and our souls; and let us pray to God to affect us with them by his Spirit and grace, and to testify his acceptance of the sacrifice of a broken heart, which we are to offer, by kindling it with this holy fire from heaven. Awake O north wind! and come thou south, and blow upon my garden. Come thou blessed Spirit, and move upon these waters, these dead waters, to set them a moving in rivers of living water; come and breathe upon these dry bones that they may live. O that I might now be in the mount of God! That I might be so taken up with the things of the Spirit and the other world, that for the time I may even forget that I am yet in the body in this world! O that I might be soaring upward, upward toward God, pressing forward,

forward toward heaven, fervent in spirit serving the Lord, for here is no time to trifle!"

In order that you may possess the state of mind above described, permit me to repeat the admonition in reference to the necessity of meditating on your sins and miseries, and thus humbling yourself before God.

1. Consider the sum of the commandments of God, viz: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." Commune with your own heart; turn your thoughts within, and remember the evil desires and inclinations that have reigned there. Single out your transgressions one by one and look at yourself as you are seen in the pure mirror of the law of God. You have never fulfilled these ten commandments, and you are exposed to eternal condemnation on account of your disobedience. Confess your sins with deep self-abasement, and be awake to a sense of your need of Christ's righteousness and life.

2. Exercise a firm trust in the promises of salvation. Meditate on the work of redemption accomplished by your Saviour. Follow him, in your thoughts, from the humble child of Bethlehem, the child set for the rising and falling of many in Israel, to the agonizing Redeemer in the garden of Gethsemane, and the suffering Saviour on the cross, and the risen deliverer now seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, from whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead; for "that same Jesus shall come in like manner as he went up." "For as often as ye eat of this bread and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come." Though your sins are many; though many infirmities still cleave to you, they are covered by the sufferings and obedience of Jesus Christ, until they shall be finally forever removed. While you come trembling for

your sins, therefore, think of Jesus your Saviour. Let all fear of man depart, and think only of the presence of God, and say in spirit with Isaiah, "I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation."

3. Consider the emblems as the very pledges of your redemption; as the very confirmation of your salvation. Consider the Holy Ghost as present for the purpose of sealing salvation upon your heart more and more. As you eat the bread and drink the wine, as you go to and come from the Lord's Supper, remember that Jesus himself "will as certainly feed and refresh your hungry and contrite heart and weary soul, with the life that dwells in his crucified body in heaven, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as you receive the emblems of that body and blood from the hands of the minister, and eat and drink in remembrance of him."

4. Exercise joy and gratitude for your deliverance. If you have opened your heart by faith, you will be filled with joy; your soul will be filled with all the communicable fulness of God. Rejoice in view of the sacrifice of Christ, once accomplished on the cross. Rejoice in view of the resurrection of Christ from the dead; "for now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Rejoice in view of Christ's second coming, when he shall fully deliver you from the cross, from the ills of life, from sin and temptation, from death and impending woe, and receive you to himself in the kingdom of his Father. After Jesus, in sight of his disciples ascended up to heaven, it is said they returned to Jerusalem with great joy: they were joyful because he said, "I will come to you again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also." Rejoice, therefore, in being counted worthy to become a disciple of Jesus. Enter into the courts of the Lord with joy, and into his presence with thanksgiving, and

say with the Psalmist, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord; I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people."

A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO IS ABOUT TO APPROACH THE LORD'S TABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME.

Holy, holy, holy art thou, O Lord God Omnipotent! Thou canst not look upon sin with any degree of allowance. It becomes me, therefore, to come into thy presence with the deepest reverence. Lord, I am vile and sinful, and thou art holy. All thy works are holy and good; and "when I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and stars which thou hast ordained;" I am induced to exclaim, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" Yet, insignificant as man is, thou hast endowed him with mind and immortality. It is a part of thy wisdom and mercy from "the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hast thou chosen. Yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in thy presence."

Almighty God! may I, who, as a prodigal son, have wandered from thee, trampled thy law under my feet, despised thy government, and would have none of thy reproofs, may I return? May I be accepted? May I be received at thy table and partake of the provisions of thy house? Lord Jesus! unto whom should I go but unto thee? for thou alone hast the words of eternal life. My helpless soul hangs upon thee. Lord search me and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Lord, I would commit my soul to thee. I would open my heart to thee; help me, O Lord! and cleanse me from my sins. "Create in me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a right spirit within me," and when I, for the first time, approach the holy communion, O Lord! may it not be with unhallowed hands; may it not

be to eat and drink condemnation to myself; but Lord, grant that I may be fed with the crucified body of Christ, with the hidden manna, the only heavenly bread, by the power and through the medium of the Holy Ghost. And when I go from this holy ordinance, may I no more live in sin; may I not betray thee; may I not thus crucify thee, O Jesus! afresh; but may I cheerfully bear my cross, deny myself, confess my Saviour before the world, and in all my trials and distresses, may my firm trust and confidence be in thee, and may I look for the appearing of the great God and my Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall change my vile body and fashion it like unto his own glorious body, who shall raise me up at the last day to sit with him in heavenly places above. And unto thee, the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shall be everlasting praises given. Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

REFLECTIONS AFTER COMMUNION.

"Be ye also thankful."

It is presumed, that you have enjoyed a precious communion season. The Saviour, no doubt, seemed indescribably precious to your soul. It was indeed a mount of privilege; a heavenly place in Christ Jesus, and perhaps the remembrance of Christ in this ordinance, is still fresh in your mind. Perhaps the savor of it follows you to your daily avocations, and produces a heavenly peace of mind. O how happy should we be, should Christ's sweet mercy always thus follow us!

On the other hand, there is a liability of your losing the comfort of this ordinance, and thereby losing the comfort of the Christian, which it is your duty and privilege to enjoy. The natural tendency of worldly matters is to draw your mind away from religious things, and this may be accompanied with the furious assaults of Satan to withdraw your mind from spiritual duties and spiritual comforts. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest and findeth none; then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out, and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished." He makes a fresh assault, and if he cannot take possession of the will, and control it, he will at least greatly annoy the mind with wicked suggestions. For the purpose of avoiding the consequences alluded to, and for the better improvement of the sacrament, I will subjoin an exhortation,

given by Matthew Henry, to order the conversation aright after this ordinance:

"We will now suppose the new moon to be gone, the Sabbath to be past, and the solemnities of the sacrament-day to be over; and is our work done? No: now the most needful and difficult part of our work begins; which is, to maintain such a constant watch over ourselves, that we may, in the whole course of our conversation, exemplify the blessed fruits and effects of our communion with God in this ordinance. When we come down from this mount, we must, as Moses did, bring the tables of the testimony with us in our hands, that we may in all things have respect to God's commandments, and frame our lives according to them. Then we truly get good by this ordinance, when we are made better by it, and use it daily as a bridle of restraint to keep us from all manner of sin, and as a spur of constraint to push us on in all manner of duty.

"I shall say for the first, the Lord's Supper was instituted not only for the solemnizing of the memorial of Christ's death at certain times, but for the preserving of the remembrance of it in our minds at all times, as a powerful argument against every thing that is evil, and a prevailing inducement to every thing that is good; in this sense we must 'bear about with us continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal bodies.' It was instituted, not only for the sealing of the covenant, that it might be ratified; but for the imprinting of it upon our minds, that we may ever be mindful of the covenant, and live under the commanding power of it.

"We must see to it, that there be an agreement between our performances at the Lord's table and at other times; that we be uniform in our religion, and not guilty of a self-contradiction. What will it profit us, if we pull down with one hand what we build up with the other; and undo in our

lives what we have done in our devotions? That we may not do so, let us be governed by these rules:

1. "Our conversation must be such, that we may adorn the profession which, in the Lord's Supper, we have made. We have in that ordinance solemnly owned ourselves the disciples and followers of the Lord Jesus. We have done ourselves the honor to subscribe ourselves his humble servants, and he has done us the honor to admit us into his family; and now we are concerned to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called; that, our relation to Christ being so much an honor to us, we may never be a dishonor to it. We are said to be taken into covenant with God for this very end, that we may be unto him for a "name, and a praise, and for a glory;" that we may be witnesses for him and for the honor of his name among men.

"We must, therefore, be very cautious, that we never say or do anything to the reproach of the gospel and Christ's holy religion, or which may give any occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. If those who profess to be devout towards God, be unjust and dishonest towards men, this casts reproach upon devotion, as if it would consist with, and countenance immorality. If those who call themselves Christians walk as other Gentiles walk, and do Satan's drudgery in Christ's livery, Christianity suffers by it, and religion is wounded in the house of her friends. Injuries are done it which cannot be repaired, and those will have a great deal to answer for another day, for whose sakes the name of God and his doctrine are thus evil spoken of.

"By our coming to the Lord's Supper we distinguish ourselves from those who happen merely to be baptized in their infancy; and by a voluntary act of our own, we surname ourselves by the name of Israel. Now, if, after we have thus distinguished ourselves, and so raised the expectations of our neighbors from us, we do that which is unbecoming

the character we bear ; if we be vain, and carnal, and intemperate ; if we be false and unfair, cruel and unmerciful, what will the Egyptians say ? They will say, commend us to the children of this world, if these be the children of God ; for what do they more than others ? Let us, therefore, be always jealous for the reputation of our profession, and afraid of doing that which may in the least be a blemish to it ; and the greater profession we make, the more tender let us be of it ; because we have the more eyes upon us, that watch for our halting. When we do good, we must remember the Apostle's caution, " Let not your good be evil spoken of."

" We must also be very studious to do that which will redound to the credit of our profession. It is not enough that we be not a scandal to religion ; but we must strive to be an ornament to it, by excelling in virtue, and being forward to every good work. Our light must shine, as the face of Moses did, when he came down from the mount ; that is, our good works must be such that they who see them may give religion their good word, and thereby " glorify our Father which is in heaven." " Our conversation must be as becomes the gospel of Jesus Christ," that they who will not be won by the word, may be won by it to say : " We will go with you ; for we have heard that God is with you." If there be any virtue, if there be any praise, more amiable and lovely than another, let us think on these things. Are we children ? Let us walk as obedient children, well taught, and well managed. Are we soldiers ? Let us approve ourselves good soldiers, well trained and well disciplined ; so shall we do honor to him that has called us, and thus wisdom will be justified in her children.

2. " Our conversation must be such, that we may fulfill the engagements which at the Lord's table we have laid ourselves under. Having at God's altar sworn that we will

keep his righteous judgments, we must conscientiously perform it in all the evidences of a holy, righteous, and sober conversation. The vows we have made, express or implicit, must be carefully made good by a constant watchfulness against all sin, and a constant diligence in all duty; because better is it not to vow, than to vow and not pay.

"When we are at any time tempted to sin, or in danger of being surprised into any ill thing, let this be our reply to the tempter, and with this let us quench his fiery darts, 'Thy vows are upon me, O God.' Did I not say, 'I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue?' I did say so, and therefore 'I will keep my mouth as with a bridle.' Did I not make 'a covenant with mine eyes?' I did: that, therefore, shall be to me a covering of the eyes, that they may never be either the inlets or outlets of sin. Did I not say, 'I will not transgress?' I did so; and therefore, by the grace of God, I will 'abstain from all appearances of evil, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.' An honest man is as good as his word.

"When we begin to grow slowthful and careless in our duty, backward to it, and slack in it, let this stir up the gift that is in us, and quicken us to every good word and work: 'O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord;' thou hast said it with the blood of Christ in thy hand, 'he is thy Lord then, and worship thou him.' When a lion in the streets deters us from any duty, let this help us over the difficulty with a steady resolution: 'I have opened my mouth unto the Lord; and, without incurring the guilt of perjury, I cannot go back.'

3. "Our conversation must be such, that we may make some grateful returns for the favors which we have received. The law of gratitude is one of the laws of nature; for the ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; and some have thought that all our gospel duty may very fitly be comprised in that of gratitude to our Redeemer.

"In the Lord's Supper, we see what Christ has done for us, and we receive what he bestows on us; and in consideration of both, we must set ourselves not only to love and praise him, but to walk before him in the land of the living; that, though we cannot return him any equivalent for his kindness, yet, by complying with his will, and consulting his honor, we may show that we bear a grateful mind, and would render again according to the benefit done unto us.

"By wilful sin after a sacrament, we load ourselves with the guilt, not only of treachery, but of base ingratitude. It was a great aggravation of Solomon's apostacy, that "he turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice." More than twice, yea, many a time has God appeared for us, not only in his providences, but to us in his ordinances, manifesting himself in a distinguishing way to us, and not unto the world. Now, if we carry ourselves strangely toward him, who has so favored us, and rebel against him who has spared and ransomed us, we deserve to be stigmatized with a mark of everlasting infamy, as the most ungrateful wretches that ever God's earth bore, or his sun shone upon. Foolish people and unwise are we, thus to requite the Lord. Let us, therefore, reason with ourselves, when at any time we are tempted to sin, after he has given us such a deliverance as this, shall we again break his commandments? Shall we spit in his face, and spurn at the bowels of such loving-kindness? After we have eaten bread with Christ, shall we lift up the heel against him? No, God forbid; we will not continue in sin, after grace has thus abounded. Let the love of Christ constrain us.

4. "Our conversation must be such that we may preserve the comforts which we have tasted in the Lord's Supper. Have we been satisfied with the goodness of God's house? Let us not receive the grace of God therein in vain, by the forfeiture of those satisfactions. "Fear the Lord and his

goodness," that is, fear lest you sin against that goodness, and so sin it away. Have we received Christ Jesus the Lord? Let us hold fast what we have received, that no man take our crown, and the comfort of it. Has God spoken peace to us? Let us then never return to folly, lest we break in upon the peace that God has spoken; it is a jewel too precious to be pawned. Has God made us to hear joy and gladness? Let us not set ourselves out of the hearing of that joyful sound, by listening to the voice of Satan's charms, charm he ever so wisely.

"If we walk loosely and carelessly after a sacrament, we provoke God to hide his face from us, to take from us the cup of consolation, and to put into our hands in stead of it the cup of trembling; we cloud our evidences, shake our hopes, and wither our comforts, and undo what we have been doing at this ordinance. That caution which the Apostle gives to the elect lady and her children, should be ever sounding in our ears: 'Look to ourselves, that we lose not the things we have wrought,' or 'gained.' Let us not, by our own folly and neglect, lose the benefit of what we have done, and what we have got at the Lord's table.

"Especially we should take heed lest Satan get an advantage against us, and improve that to our prejudice, which we do not take due care to improve as we ought, to our benefit. After the sop, Satan entered into Judas. If the comforts which we think we have received in this ordinance do not make us more watchful, it is well if they do not make us more secure. If they be not a savor of life unto life, by deterring us from sin, there is danger lest they prove a savor of death unto death, by hardening us in sin. Those are but pretended comforts in Christ that are thus made real supports in sin: 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked.' Hell will be hell indeed to those who thus 'trample under foot the blood of the covenant, as an unholy thing,

and do despite to the Spirit of grace.' Their case is desperate indeed, who are emboldened in sin by their approaches to God.

5. "Our conversation must be such, that we may evidence the communion we have had with God in Christ at the Lord's table. It is not enough to say that we have fellowship with him; the vilest hypocrites pretend to that honor; but, by walking in darkness, they disprove their pretensions, and give themselves the lie. We must, therefore, show that we have fellowship with him, by walking in light, as he also walked. By keeping up communion with God in providences, having our eyes ever towards him, and acknowledging him in all our ways; receiving all our comforts as the gifts of his bounty, and bearing all our afflictions as his fatherly chastisements, we evidence that we have had communion with him in ordinances. They who converse much with scholars, evidence it by the tongue of the learned; as one may likewise discover by the politeness and refinement of a man's air and mein, that his conversation has been much with persons of quality; thus they that have communion with the holy God, should make it appear in all holy conversation, not suffering any corrupt communication to proceed out of their mouth, but abounding in that which is good, and to the use of edifying, that, by our speech and behavior, it may appear to what country we belong.

"When Peter and John acquitted themselves before the council with such a degree of conduct and assurance, as one could not have expected from unlearned and ignorant men, not acquainted with courts, or camps, or academies; it is said, that they who marvelled at it, 'took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.'

"For the second thing proposed, let us mention some particulars, wherein we ought, in a special manner, to approve ourselves well after this solemnity, that, 'as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, we may so walk in him.'

1. "We must see to it, that we be sincerely devout and pious. It is not enough that we live soberly and righteously, but we must live godly, in this present world, and our sacramental engagements should stir us up to abound therein more and more. After an interview with our friends, by which mutual acquaintance is improved, and mutual affections confirmed, we are more constant and endearing in our correspondence with each other; so we should be with God after this ordinance, more frequent in holy ejaculations and breathings of soul after God, intermixed even with common business and conversation; more abundant in reading, meditation and solemn prayer; more diligent in our attendance on public ordinances, more fixed and enlarged in closet devotions, and more lively and affectionate in our family worship. Those religious exercises wherein we have formerly been remiss and careless, easily persuaded to put them by, or put them off, we should now be more constant to, and and more careful in, more close in our application to them, and more serious in our performance of them.

"If we have indeed found that it is good for us to draw near to God, we will endeavor to keep near to him, so near to him, as on every occasion to speak to him, and to hear from him. If this sacrament has been our delight, the word will be our delight, and we will daily converse with it; prayer will be our delight, and we will give ourselves to it, and continue in it. They that have been feasted on the sacrifice of atonement, ought to abound in sacrifices of acknowledgment, the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and a broken heart which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ; and having in our flock a male, we must offer that, and not a corrupt thing.

"It is a shame of many who are called Christians, and have a name and a place in God's family, that they are as backward and indifferent in holy duties, as if they were

afraid of doing too much for God and their own souls, and as if their chief care were to know just how much will serve to bring them to heaven, that they may do no more. They can be content to go a mile, but they are not willing to go twain. And does it become those on whom God has sown so plentifully, to make their returns so sparingly? Ought we not rather to inquire what free-will offerings we may bring to God's altar; and how we may do more in religion than we have been doing? They that have found how good a table the Lord keeps, and how welcome they have been to it, should desire to dwell in his house all the days of their life; and blessed are they that do so, 'they will be still praising him.'

2. "We must see to it, that we are conscientiously just and honest. We do not only contradict our profession, and give ourselves the lie, but we reproach the religion we profess and give it the lie, if, after we have been at this sacrament, we deceive or defraud our brethren in any matter; for this is that which the Lord our God requires of us, that we do justly, that is, that we never do wrong to any, in their body, goods, or good name, and that we ever study to render to all their due, according to the relation we stand in, and the obligation we lie under to them. 'That, therefore, which is altogether just ('justice' as the word is,) thou shalt follow.' There are many who make no great pretensions to religion, and yet natural conscience, sense of honor, and a regard to the common good, keep them strictly just in all their dealings, and they would scorn to do a base or dishonest thing; and shall not the bonds of this ordinance, added to those inducements, restrain us from every thing that has the appearance of fraud and injustice? A Christian, a communicant, and yet a cheat, yet a man not to be trusted, not to be dealt with but standing on one's guard! How can these be reconciled? Will that man be true to

his God whom he has not seen, that is false to his brother whom he has seen? Shall he be entrusted with the true riches, that is 'not faithful in the unrighteous mammon?'

"Let the remembrance of our sacramental vows be always fresh in our minds, to give a check to those secret covetings, which are the springs of all fraudulent practices. I have disclaimed the world for a portion: shall I then, for the compassing of a little of its forbidden gain, wrong my brother, to whom I ought to do good; wrong my profession, which I ought to adorn; and wrong my own conscience, which I ought to keep void of offence? God forbid!. I have likewise renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, and promised not to walk in craftiness; 'by the grace of God, I will, therefore, ever have my conversation in the world, in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom.' They that are so well skilled in the arts of deceit, as to save themselves from the scandal of it, yet cannot thereby save themselves from the guilt of it, and the ruin that attends it; for doubtless 'the Lord is the avenger of all such. Those that cheat their neighbors, cannot cheat their God, but will prove in the end to have cheated themselves into everlasting misery; and what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul.'

3. "We must see to it, that we are religiously meek and peaceable. We must not only come from this ordinance in a calm and quiet frame of mind, but we must always keep ourselves in such a frame. By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, (which the Apostle mentions as a most powerful charm,) let us be wrought upon to be always meek and gentle, as those that have learned of him. The storms of passion that are here calmed, must never be suffered to make head again; nor must the enmities that are here slain, ever be revived. Having eaten this passover, we must all our life long keep the feast, without 'the leaven of malice

and wickedness.' Having been feasted at wisdom's table, we must always abide under the conduct and influence of that wisdom, which is 'first pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated.' God was greatly displeased with those that, after they released their bond-servants, according to the law, recalled their releases, and brought them into subjection again. And so will he be with those who seem to set aside their quarrels when they come from the sacrament, but as soon as the pang of their devotion is over, the heat of their passion returns, and they resume their quarrels, and revive all their angry resentments; thereby making it appear, that they did never truly forgive, and therefore were never forgiven of God.

"Let those that have had communion with God in this ordinance, be able to appeal to their relations and domestics, and all they converse with concerning this; and to vouch them for witnesses, that they have mastered their passions, and are grown more mild and quiet in their families than sometimes they have been; and that even when they are most provoked, they know both how to hear reason and how to speak it. Whatever others do, let us never give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to say, that the seriousness of religion makes men sour and morose, and that zeal in devotion disposes the mind to peevishness and passion; but let us evidence the contrary, that the grace of God does indeed make men good-natured, and that the pleasures of serious godliness make men truly cheerful and easy to all about them. Having been sealed 'to the day of redemption, let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,' that blessed dove; and that we may not do so, 'let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from us, with all malice.'

4. "We must see to it, that we be strictly sober and chaste. Gluttony, and drunkenness, and fleshly lusts, are

as great a reproach as can be to those that profess relation to Christ, and the expectation of eternal life. It becomes those that have been feasted at the table of the Lord, and have there tasted the pleasures of the spiritual and divine life, to be dead to all the delights of sense, and to make it appear that they are so, by a holy indifference to them. Let not the flesh be indulged to the prejudice of the spirit, nor provision be made for the fulfilling of the lusts thereof. Have we been entertained with the dainties of heaven? Let us not be desirous of the dainties of sense, nor solicitous to have the appetite gratified, and all our enjoyments to the highest degree pleasing. It was the sin and shame of the Israelites in the wilderness, that while they were fed with manna, angel's food, they lusted, saying, 'Who will give us flesh to eat?' And they sin after the similitude of that transgression, who, when they have eaten the bread of life, and drunk the water of life, yet continue to be as curious and careful about their meat and drink, as if they knew no better things, and had their happiness bound up in them; as if the kingdom of God were in this sense, meat and drink, and a Turkish paradise were their heaven. Surely they that are of this spirit serve not our Lord Christ, but their own bellies.

"But if they thus shame themselves who indulge the flesh though their reason remains with them; what shall we think of those who, by their intemperance, put themselves quite out of possession of their own souls, unfit themselves for the service of God, and level themselves with the beasts? A Christian, a communicant, and yet a tippler, a drunkard, and a companion with those that run to this excess of riot!

This is the sin that has been the scandal and ruin of many, who, having begun in the spirit, have thus ended in the flesh; this is that which has quenched the Spirit, hardened the heart, besotted the head, debauched the conscience, wither-

ed the profession, and so has slain its thousands, and its ten thousands. Against this sin, the Lord's prophet must cry aloud and spare not; and dare those who partake 'of the cup of the Lord, drink of the cup of devils?' Can there be so much concord between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial? No, there cannot; these are contrary, the one to the other. If men's communicating, will not break them off from drunkenness, their drunkenness must break them off from communicating; for these are spots in our feasts of charity; and, if God be true, 'drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.' Let me, therefore, with all earnestness, as one that desires to obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful, warn all that profess religion and relation to Christ, to stand upon their guard against this snare, which has been fatal to multitudes. As you value the favor of God, the comforts of the Spirit, the credit of your profession, and the welfare of your own souls here and hereafter, take heed of being entangled, in any temptations to this sin; shun the society of these evil-doers, abstain from all appearances of sin; watch and be sober. It is not for Christians to drink to excess, and to allow themselves in those riotings and revelings, which even the sober heathen condemned and abhorred.

"Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and laciviousness, are likewise lusts of the flesh, and defiling to the soul, which, therefore, all those must carefully avoid that profess to be led by the Spirit: they are abominable things which the Lord hates, and which we also must hate. Are not our bodies temples of the Holy Ghost? Dare we then defile them? Are they not members of Christ? And shall we make them members of a harlot? Let those that eat of the holy things, be holy both in body and spirit, and possess their vessels in sanctification and honor, and not in the lusts of uncleanness. Let those eyes never be guilty of a wanton

look, that have here seen Christ evidently set forth crucified among us; let not lewd, corrupt communication proceed out of that mouth into which God's covenant has been taken; let not unclean, lascivious thoughts be entertained in that heart in which the holy Jesus vouchsafes to dwell. Let those that have eaten of wisdom's bread, and drunk the wine that she has mingled, never hearken to the invitations of the foolish woman, who courts the unwary to stolen waters, and bread eaten in secret, under pretense that they are sweet and pleasant; 'for the dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell.'

5. "We must see to it, that we be abundantly charitable and beneficent. It is not enough that we do no hurt; but if we would order our conversation aright, we must, as we have opportunity, do good to all men, as becomes those to whom God in Christ is good, and does good, and who profess themselves the disciples and followers of Him who went about doing good. Shall we be selfish, and seek our own things only, who have here seen how Christ humbled himself for us? Shall we be sparing of our pains for our brethren's good, who have here seen Christ among us, as one that serves, as one that suffers, and as one who came not to be ministered unto, 'but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many?' Shall we be shy of speaking to, or speaking for our poor brethren, who have here seen our Lord Jesus not ashamed to own us, and intercede for us, notwithstanding our poverty and meanness? Shall we be strait-handed in distributing to the necessities of the saints, who have here found Christ so liberal and open-handed in imparting to us, not only the gospel of God, but even his own soul? After we have been at this ordinance, we should show how much we are affected with our receiving there, by being ready and forward 'to every good work;' because our goodness extends not to God, it ought to extend to the

saints that are in the earth. Thus we must be followers of God as dear children; we must walk in love, as here we see Christ that loved us, and hath given himself for us.

6. "We must see to it, that we be more taken off from this world, and more taken up with another world. A Christian then lives like himself, when he lives above the things that are seen, which are temporal, and looks upon them with a holy contempt, and keeps his eye fixed upon the things that are not seen, which are eternal, looking upon them with a holy concern. We are not of this world, but we are called out of it; we belong to another world, and are designed for it; we must, therefore, 'seek those things that are above, and not set our affections on things beneath.'

"The thoughts of Christ crucified should wean us from this world. By frequent meditation on the cross of Christ, 'the world will be crucified to us, and we to the world;' that is, the world and we shall grow very indifferent to each other, and no love shall be lost between us.

"The thoughts of Christ glorified should raise our hearts to that blessed place where Christ 'sitteth on the right hand of God, and from whence we look for the Saviour.' When we commemorate Christ's entrance within the veil as our forerunner, and have good hopes of following him shortly; when we think of his being in paradise, and of our being with him; how should our affections be carried out towards that joy of our Lord! How studious should we be to do the work of heaven, conform to the laws of heaven, and converse as may be with the glorious society there! Having received the adoption of sons, we should improve our acquaintance with, and raise our expectations of, the inheritance of sons."

A PRAYER FOR ONE RETURNING FROM COMMUNION.

Almighty and most merciful God, thy compassions are great. My soul is subdued into penitence, and thankfulness, in view of the sweet consolations of thy grace, and in view of thy condescension in exercising mercy towards man, in allowing thyself to commune with him, and in permitting him to commune with thee in the holy Supper. Adored be thy holy name, O God! for thy unspeakable gift; and whilst I return from thy sweet communion, may the savor of it follow me, and may the remembrance of Jesus as my sanctifier, and redeemer from sin, be ever present to mind. And, O forbid, Almighty God! that I, Judas-like, should betray my Lord and Saviour, either by neglecting my duty, or by falling into wilful sin. O may I not be left to coldness and luke-warmness; may I, most of all, dread coldness and indifference toward thee. Lord, do thou work in me to will and to do of thy good pleasure. Suffer not, O Lord, thy feeble child to fall, but uphold thou me with thy powerful hand; and O grant that I may "press forward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

"As Jesus is my exemplar, may I walk as he walked;" and though I should not come up to the measure of a perfect imitation of Jesus my Saviour, may I, nevertheless, covet earnestly the best gifts, and become more and more conformed to the image of him who "died for me, and rose again." O help me, Lord, I beseech thee, to flee from sin, from lusts that war against the soul, and especially from "the sin that doeth so easily beset me." Lord help, and let not my soul bring reproach upon thy name. Let not my heart rob thee of that service and homage which is thy due. May the fear of thy holy name, and the love of Christ constrain me to a holy walk and conversation, that I may ever be ready to say, "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain," and "that, whether present or absent, I may be accepted" of him. These things I ask for his name's sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

CHAPTER X.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER, CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THAT BRANCH OF THE CHURCH, OF WHICH HE IS A MEMBER.

It is the duty of a church-member to become acquainted, so far as he may have the time and means, with the history and present position of his denomination. It is his duty to become acquainted with her doctrines, and her origin and history. If she have a distinctive character, a character that differs in some respects from all other denominations, he should know it. If she hold a form of doctrine, that distinguishes her, and if that form of doctrine and discipline have merits of its own, being founded upon, and in agreement with the holy Scriptures, and forming an important part of Christian doctrine, he should be ready and willing to defend it. He should thus be found willing to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

Indifference to the important truths of Christianity is sinful. Only by a living, active interest in the truth, can the member of the church fulfill his whole duty as he ought. Only by his interest here, will he be active and alive in the performance of his duties elsewhere. His piety will be affected by his doctrines, and especially by his interest in those doctrines. If he be indifferent in his views of religious truth, his piety will either go astray, leading him to "zeal without knowledge," or else it will suffer in its ardor, and lead to a diminution of zeal.

On the other hand, he should not be unduly attached to his opinions. This would be bigotry. Bigotry is such an

attachment to opinions or practices, as they do not deserve. It is an unreasonable attachment; it is blind zeal, founded merely on prejudice and party spirit. Such was the zeal of the Jews in holding on to the outward forms merely of Judaism.

The Christian should hold his essential, or at least, important particular doctrines, with a view of seeing them reconciled on a higher basis, and thus have the way prepared for the union of the Church in one body, so that all Christians may fully cöoperate with each other in building up the Redeemer's kingdom, without let or hindrance. He should "look not only upon his own things, but also on the things of others," confining himself, however, always within his own proper sphere, and not interfering with the rights and duties of others, and so making himself "a busy body in other men's matters." He should cultivate a fraternal feeling toward all Christians, praying and laboring for the "unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace," bearing in mind the words of the Saviour: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: that they may all be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

The German Reformed Church has a distinctive character. She originated at a time when men took a lively interest in the truth; the time of the Reformation, when the great body of Protestants divided into different parties, among which were chiefly the Lutheran and Reformed, and a little later, the Calvinistic. The Reformed were led for a while by Zwingli of Switzerland, under whose guidance they earnestly sought a reconciliation with Luther; but Zwingli soon dying, no union was effected. The Reformed Church, however, true to her conciliatory character, made another effort, after the death of Luther, to unite the two commu-

nions by forming that excellent summary of doctrines, the Heidelberg Catechism, and partly succeeded. Her doctrines were formed to reconcile differences, not, however, by becoming indifferent to theories, and to essential or even important doctrines; but by leaving out such as are unimportant, or on which there may be admitted differences of opinion, and by placing essential and important doctrines in such a position, as to leave room to reconcile conflicting and one-sided views, by carrying them forward to a higher position. She was the product of that part of the Protestants, who longed and prayed for a union among Protestants, whilst, at the same time, she held on, with a firm grasp, to what was good and true in the old Catholicism. She has a mission still to fulfil. Her voice, though not yet heard as it ought to be, will be heard in fulfilment of the prayer of the Saviour, that his people may all be one, as he and the Father are one, that the world may believe that God has sent him.

In his own Church, first of all, should the church-member labor for the interests of religion. In laboring there to promote the cause of true religion, he most effectually promotes the cause of religion in the world at large. Every man should "build over against his own house," and thus help to rear the common structure, the "city set upon a hill that cannot be hid."

First, let us notice the general interests of the Church, among which are several institutions and enterprises, which are essential to her prosperity and to the conversion of the world.

The first of these are schools of learning for the education of ministers. It is no longer a matter of doubt, that an educated ministry is necessary; and it is perhaps equally evident, that the most efficient method of educating ministers is by the endowment of institutions, and the calling of

professors, who shall make it their particular business to train and educate men for the office of the ministry. Christ educated his apostles, although they had the inspiration of the Holy Spirit besides. With equal propriety, yea, with equal necessity, we may say, should the successors of Christ teach others who succeed them. Paul, instructing Timothy with regard to this duty, says: "And the things that thou hast heard of me, among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." The custom of instructing candidates for the ministry, was practiced by Christ and his apostles, and in fulfilment of their practice and their injunctions, it is necessary that we, for the sake of efficiency in the work of preparing young men for the responsible office of the ministry, should establish schools of learning, where a number of pupils can be assembled, and enjoy the advantages of the best instructions, and where men, the best qualified to teach, can impart their instructions to a larger number at once.

In this work, we have a still more ancient example than that of the apostles, viz: that of the prophets. The custom of instructing candidates for the sacred office of prophet, or teacher, was in vogue in the time of the ancient prophets. Samuel, who was one of the first of the regular prophets, was the first who received others and instructed them to become teachers of the people; and in his time were commenced the institutions which were called, "The schools of the prophets." Those, upon whom the spirit of prophecy fell, were received into these schools to prepare them more fully to stand as watchmen on the walls of Zion. If such institutions were necessary when men enjoyed the benefits of direct inspiration, how much more are they necessary at this time, when men must give themselves more exclusively "to reading, to exhortation and to doctrine?" These institutions must be supported by the Christian pub-

lic. It is the solemn duty of the church-member to contribute of his substance, in proportion to his increase, toward the endowment of colleges and seminaries. They are a necessary means of carrying forward the cause of God in the world, and no Christian who has that cause at heart can innocently omit his duty in this respect.

Paul was taught at the feet of Gamaliel. Gamaliel was a teacher in the synagogue or church. These synagogues came in the room of the schools of the prophets, after the seventy years' captivity of the Jews in Babylon, and were established and kept up by the people of the Jews. In them the scribes instructed the people in the law of Moses. In some of these synagogues were chief instructors, who taught others to become teachers or scribes. Gamaliel was one of those chief instructors.

In these institutions—thus under the watchful eye, and tender care of the people—whatever of knowledge and true religion was still existing among the Jews in the time of our Saviour, was communicated and perpetuated. If the Jews considered it a privilege and duty thus to keep up the oracles of God amongst them, how much more should the Christian keep up the more lively oracles of the New dispensasion, since the gospel under it, with all its forms of administration, is more especially the power of God unto salvation?

Dear Christian reader, the watchmen who are now standing on the walls of Zion, and watching for souls, as those that must give account, will soon fall. How shall their places be filled? Others must be preparing for the work, or you will be left as sheep without a shepherd. If you do not consider yourself called to preach, allow me to urge upon you the duty of helping others, who are ready and willing to engage in the work. Speak to that young man, who seems to possess the love of souls, and help him to prepare himself to labor for their welfare. Help with your

money, to establish and keep up a College and Seminary, and sustain him there, if he need your assistance.

But you should not only give your means; you should also give your prayers. These institutions of learning should become objects of your affections and prayers. Without God's help, nothing can be accomplished. "Without me, ye can do nothing." Give of your substance, and let your supplications ascend to the throne of grace, that your gift may be prospered in the direction in which it is appropriated, and let your supplications ascend to the throne of grace, that others may "come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty;" for the Lord turns the heart of men, as the rivers of water are turned, and the effectual and fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much, and if we ask anything according to his will, he will hear us.

A PRAYER FOR INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING.

Lord, thou hast, in all ages, had those who were as ensigns of the people, and believing it to be thy will, that they should be still continued, and multiplied in number, and prepared for the labor of winning souls to Christ, I would implore thy blessing upon the efforts of thy people, in rearing and sustaining institutions for the promotion of knowledge and piety in those, who shall be called to stand as watchmen on the walls of Zion. May these institutions ever be the seats of virtue and religion! May they ever be the fountains of godliness and pure doctrines. May those who come from thence, have a double portion of the Spirit of their divine Master, that they may go forth to bless the world; and may "the wilderness and the solitary places be glad for them, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Lord, put it into the hearts of many to take up their cross, if cross it be indeed, and become ensigns of the people, to proclaim

from the sacred desk the glad tidings of salvation to a fallen world. Lord, send forth laborers into thy vineyard; send forth laborers to the harvest; for "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." And O grant, dearest Lord, to influence the hearts of those, who have named thy name, to come to the help of those who have consecrated themselves to serve thee in the holy ministry. Do thou "establish the work of their hands" for thy truth's sake. Amen.

CHAPTER XI.

MISSIONS.

The word mission is derived from a word that means to send. Missions are those enterprises in which the Church, in some collective capacity, sends her ministers to destitute places to build up congregations, and aids in their support. It is the duty of the Church to send her ministers to those who do not enjoy the opportunity of hearing the gospel, and of becoming members of the Church. Whilst it is her duty to labor and pray for the success of the gospel at home, with those who now hear it, it is, at the same time, her duty to send it abroad to those who do not hear it. Whilst our Saviour preached in the land of Judea, he also preached in Galilee of the Gentiles. The Church should not wait until all are converted at home, before she directs her efforts abroad. Yea, rather, when men will reject the word of life at home, she should turn from them and seek for success elsewhere; and, like Paul, say: "Since you deem yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

What is the duty of the Church in general, is the duty of every church-member in particular. Every church-member should consider himself sent from God to the world, and commissioned to impart the blessings of Christianity to others, so far as it may be in his power to do so. The Saviour himself was a missionary. He was sent from heaven on a mission of mercy, and having now returned to heaven, he has commissioned his people to carry out his designs. "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you." Though, as a church-member, you may not be able to go yourself, you

may, nevertheless, help to send others. You may communicate of your means to support those, who, in the spirit of their divine Master, are willing to deny themselves of the comforts of home, and Christian society, and go to heathen lands, and to the destitute portions of our own country, and break to them the bread of life. "To do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Another feature in the missionary work, is, that it is a work of faith. The missionary labors, at times, a long while without meeting with any apparent success. The moral darkness seems to be so great that the light cannot penetrate it. You may apparently contribute your money in vain. But in this, as in other things, perseverance, with the blessing of God, will conquer all things. Moreover, sometimes your money may not be applied where it ought to be. You cannot see and know all the circumstances of each field of missionary operations, and by a mistaken wisdom and an erring prudence, the places which most need and well deserve your aid, may be passed by. The best plan, therefore, seems to be, that you should give according to your ability, and commit it to those to apply it who have been chosen by the Church to look out destitute places, and send the necessary assistance. The best plan is, that you should give in faith, in reliance upon God for his blessing. In the missionary work, they who give, and they who labor in word and doctrine, should, in an eminent degree, "walk by faith, not by sight."

A PRAYER FOR MISSIONS.

Lord God! thou hast all power in heaven and on earth. Thou sayest and it is done. Thou commandest, and it stands fast.

Thou callest mankind to repentance, and thou canst make thy call effectual to salvation. Thou sendest thy messenger before thy face, and thou accompaniest him with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Lord! how feeble is man unaccompanied with thy help and thy blessing! Lord, we beseech thee, send help from the sanctuary; warm the hearts of thy people with love for their fellow-men. O, send thy gospel to the heathen. Send out thy light and thy truth among all nations. Send by whom thou wilt send; and O grant that "thy power may be made known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations." O! hasten the time, the glorious time, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

Do thou support, with thy powerful spiritual aid, thy servants in heathen lands and in the destitute portions of our own country. O make bear thine arm, through their instrumentality, in the conversion of multitudes. O may they be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; and, without fear of man, cry aloud and spare not. May they be strengthened with might by thy Spirit in the inner man; and, deeply conscious of the importance of their mission, and of the approbation of their God, as well as of the value of souls, may they speak the truth in love and sincerity, without fear of frowns, or expectation of reward from men.

Do thou help thy people to consecrate their all to thee, and come to the aid of those, who sit in the region and shadow of death. O may they not withhold from thee and thy servants, that which is due. May not their prayers and gifts cease; but with the firm determination, with thy blessing, to uphold the hands and hearts of thy servants, may they bring the tithes into the store-house. Help them to crucify "the love of money." May every avaricious thought be brought into subjection to thee, that they may "seek, first, the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Help them to crucify the flesh with all its sinful affections and lusts. May they not be stumbling blocks in the way of the advancement of truth and righteousness. O send forth thy glorious gospel! O Spirit of the living God! lift up the standard, and cause to be proclaimed the news of salvation, in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power. Amen.

CHAPTER XII.

RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPERS, PERIODICALS AND BOOKS.

"*The leaves are for the healing of the nations.*"

It is a great blessing to the world, that the art of printing has been discovered, and that thus the means of obtaining information are now so abundant. The prophecy of Daniel, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," is being fulfilled. By means of religious newspapers, information is obtained of the condition and prospects of the Church—of her missionary enterprises—their success and their difficulties, and the duty of the Church with regard to them—of "the schools of the prophets"—their prosperity or adversity, and their wants, and the duty of the Church with regard to them. All the varied religious interests of the day are presented in the newspapers of the Church, and thus our minds are stirred up by way of remembrance, and we are stimulated to prayer and active benevolence.

If we love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, we will be interested in knowing the success and progress of his cause among men; we will be interested in knowing whether that cause is advancing or retreating. If we love the Lord, we will love his Church, and we will be interested in becoming advised of all her interests and enterprises. It is the duty of the member of the Church to take the newspaper of his own denomination. As the world now stands, the cause of religion cannot be sustained and advanced without this

means of information; and, it is, therefore, the duty of those who love that cause, to support the religious paper as a means of promoting it. If they cannot use it themselves, which is rarely, if ever, the case, let them furnish it to others, who would gladly read it, but cannot afford to subscribe and pay for it. At least, help to support the paper, so that those who wish to subscribe for, and read the paper, may have an opportunity of doing so.

Periodicals also, which are published once a month, or once in two or three months, and are designed to present and recommend particular subjects and particular interests in religion, which cannot so well be presented in a general circulating newspaper, claim our attention. So also books on religious subjects of importance, such as the history of the Church, and the lives of individual members of the Church. These are all important, as a means of edification to church-members; and especially to those who wish to be useful—to those who wish to advance in holiness and knowledge. They should, therefore, be encouraged and supported.

It is the duty of the Church to furnish a religious literature, drawn from the Bible, and from the history of the Church, and from the present time. Men will read, and if they have not wholesome literature, they will take that which is pernicious. Every age demands its periodicals, books, and newspapers, as well as the Bible. The Holy Scriptures, as they are studied in connection with the ever new appearing periods in the flight of time, will produce new thoughts, and new subjects for the consideration of mankind, and these thoughts must be communicated in volumes; the "leaves are for the healing of the nations."

A PRAYER FOR THE SUCCESS OF RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.

Almighty and all-knowing God! who didst command the light to shine out of darkness, and didst shine into our hearts, giving us the light of the glorious gospel, we beseech thee, follow with thy blessing thy own written word. Make it effectual in turning men from the error of their ways—from darkness to light—from sin and Satan to thee. To this end, may it be sent forth by thy people, and may it be reverenced in every family and in every nation. Do thou cause "thy law to be magnified above all thy name." May thy word be "for the healing of the nations." May all see and know the truth. May it be upon the door posts, and at the gates of the city. May it be in the family circle, and upon the highway, and may all learn to know thee, whom to know aright is life everlasting. May all know thee from the least to the greatest. O grant, that thy word may be received with affection, and preserved from perversion. Grant grace to thy people to understand and interpret thy holy word. Preserve them from the errors which are abroad in the world. Grant thy blessing to those who shall be placed as instructors in the Church. May they receive thy guidance, and may thy Spirit lead them into all truth.

Bestow thy blessing upon the productions of the press. Grant to their authors clear heads and pure hearts. Control their judgment and guide their reason, that they may not seek their own will, but the will of him who sent them. May they have an eye single to thy glory. And be pleased, O Lord, to sanctify every channel of intelligence, that there may none be left to advocate the cause of the wicked one. May not the faith of thy people fail. "Lord, increase their faith," and may he who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, cheer them by his presence in the conflict; and may they by him triumphantly sing, "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" Amen.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN THE CONGREGATION: HIS RELATION TO HIS PASTOR AND THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.

If you have been truly converted, you will manifest your love of Christ and God's cause in the congregation. You will show forth with the meekness of wisdom, out of a good conversation, your attachment to the Church and your love of God. You will ever bear in mind your duty to "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven." You will have a steady, religious principle—a feeling of duty and privilege—to promote the glory of God, the prosperity of the Church, and the welfare of souls, by a holy walk and conversation in the world, and by a disinterested and humble deportment in the congregation, and in all your intercourse with your brethren and fellow-members. A manifestation of that charity which is "the bond of perfectness," which is the genuine chord of love, and a being "of one heart and one mind" with those who sincerely love the Lord Jesus Christ, will be a distinguishing trait of your Christian character.

"He that loveth is of God; for God is love." This charity—this ardent, sincere, and heartfelt attachment, will enable you to go through the severest self-denials, and the sharpest trials. It will enable you to submit cheerfully to the teachings and exhortations of the gospel; to reproach and wrong for the gospel's sake; and to any measure or any

course which is calculated to promote the welfare of the Church and of religion. It will restrain you from indulging a censorious and contentious spirit, which is such a fearful cause of evil in the Church.

1. This charity will manifest itself in a punctual and devout attendance at the house of God. You will be enabled to say, "I love the tents of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." That individual, who has been truly converted, will be seen every Sabbath at his place in the sanctuary, listening, with devout attention, to the heavenly knowledge, which falls from the minister's lips; for he "seeks the law at his mouth." He treasures up the sweet word of God in his heart, and his very presence and manner shows that he feels the importance of the worship of God's house. There he is to be seen, whether circumstances are favorable or unfavorable, with those whom he has under his care and control; and by his devotion and interest in the ordinances of God's house, it may be seen that he is edified and strengthened; that he finds there what his soul needs, even that which the world cannot give. Reader, is this true of you? Ah! happy soul art thou, if the love of God which passeth knowledge, thus keeps your heart and mind through Jesus Christ. Favored child of heaven! if thou lookest not at the things which are seen and are temporal, but at the things which are not seen and are eternal.

2. This charity will manifest itself in a proper regard and respect for the the preacher of the gospel.

The pious hearer regards the minister as a channel of divine influence, notwithstanding his imperfections, and, as such, he highly esteems him in love, for his work's sake." He regards him as an "ambassador of Jesus Christ," and as such, he listens to his words as being the message from God, which the minister is in duty bound to deliver and the hearer to receive. If your minister be an honest man, and

desire to do good, and preach true doctrine, God designs to bless his labors. He will "let none of his words fall to the ground." They will be either "a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." Let a man be ever so imperfect, if he preach good doctrine in the main, he will be the means of blessing to those who hear him; for God will bless his own word with a proper blessing, when it is preached in his own Church.

I do not, however, wish to be understood to say, that talents and gifts of a high order should be undervalued in the ministry. But what I wish to impress upon your mind is the fact, that there is a power and force in the ministerial office and in the ministerial work, which God has bestowed upon it, and that this is the chief thing to be kept in view. God, as it were, speaks through his ministering servants. Christ and the Holy Ghost influence them and sanction what is said in accordance with the Scriptures, so that they may say indeed, "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

As a church-member, you should guard against forming prejudices unfavorable to your minister, and against making to yourself itching ears. There are some, who have a certain standard of pulpit eloquence in their minds, to which their minister must conform, else they will take no benefit to themselves from his preaching. He must have a certain naturally fine voice, and certain gestures; and a certain manner and style, else they will not listen to his preaching. This is an old error which crept into the Church in the days of the Apostles, when some said, "I am of Paul, I of Apollos, and I of Peter," forgetting that it was Christ to whom and by whom they were converted; and as if these unimportant matters of style and manner were necessary to salvation, and a sufficient cause for separation.

Let all things be done and received, in this respect, with

charity, as well as decently, and in order. Charity covers a multitude of imperfections. It is proper that both minister and people should covet earnestly the best gifts; but yet is there a more excellent way. A sincere desire to do good, a love for God, the Church, and souls, is superior to the best gifts, and with it the best gifts may even be dispensed with. A fine voice, a prepossessing appearance, a fluent tongue, and an elegant expression, are not the essential qualifications of a "good minister of Jesus Christ;" for though he may speak with the tongue of men and of angels, yet if he have not charity, he becomes as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Guard also against looking at the faults of your minister in such a way as to lose confidence in him, or in the message which he brings to you. He is a man of like passions with yourself, and no one is without some blemish in his character. No one is entirely perfect. Even Paul did not consider himself to have apprehended, or to have become perfect; but he pressed forward and desired to improve. No greater spiritual calamity can befall a church-member, than to have his love and confidence in his minister destroyed. He can have no joy, no pleasure in the services of the sanctuary. He can derive no profit from the word preached. And if this want of confidence be not founded on a sufficient cause, it is awfully sinful. The individual's own soul suffers in the loss of peace and comfort; the congregation suffers; his pastor is injured, and the Saviour is wounded.

Most generally, the difficulties which arise between pastors and their flocks are uncalled for by the circumstances. Before a church-member withdraws his confidence, he should be well convinced, that he has a sufficient reason for it; and when he finds that he has sufficient reason to be dissatisfied, instead of indulging hatred and speaking evil of his pastor

to others, he should pray for him and speak to him, making known his objections in a friendly way, and endeavor to have them removed. By this means also should he labor together with his pastor for the faith of the gospel, and by his suggestions furnish him with matter for his pulpit ministrations. As you value the peace and comfort of your own soul; as you prize the success of the gospel in your congregation, guard, therefore, against the destruction of that charity which is the bond of perfectness, by magnifying the faults of your pastor, and withdrawing your confidence and prayers from him. He watches for your soul as one that must give account. You should, therefore, exercise charity toward him, and give him your prayers and sympathies. His anxieties and labors are many. Ah! little do you know the sense of responsibility which presses upon his mind. The apostle felt it when he said: "Brethren, pray for us, that the word of God may have free course and be glorified among you."

It may be proper in this place to say a few words with regard to pastoral visits. When your pastor visits you, you should receive him in his character as a minister of Jesus Christ. You should receive him affectionately and cordially, and exercise full confidence in him as your spiritual friend. You should let your conversation turn as much as possible on religious subjects. If you have anything to say about the Church or the congregation; if you have any doubt to remove, or any information to impart, now is the most suitable time to speak of these things. Your minister does not wish to spend much of his time in conversing on business and politics, and none at all in wholly vain conversation or idle words. He has no time to lose. It is very precious to him. It is sometimes supposed, that a minister has a great many spare moments. But the truth is, of all men, he has the least to spare. Even in his moments of

recreation and rest, his mind should be preparing itself for its labor, and gathering materials for his work. Like his Master, he must feel like saying, " I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day ; for the night cometh, wherein no man can work."

Again, the spirit of charity will prompt you to support your pastor in a pecuniary point of view. You will not suffer benevolence to exist all on the side of your minister, by permitting him to toil all his life-long for your spiritual welfare and that of others, without assisting him, by supplying his temporal wants. You will not cripple his usefulness by adding to his other cares and anxieties, the cares of subsistence. It is not recommended, that you enrich your pastor, although should he, by prudence and industry, come into the possession of wealth, it should be no disparagement to him, nor considered a calamity to the Church; for in his hands, it would be more likely to be used to the glory of God, by being applied to the benevolent operations of the Church, than in other hands. It is recommended, however, that you give him a respectable support.

Reason demands, that, as the house of worship should be convenient and sufficient for the accommodation of the audience which occupies it, so, in like manner, the household conveniences of the pastor should correspond with his station. Reason also teaches, that a minister should enjoy as many of the comforts and conveniences of life, as are enjoyed by the average of his congregation. This is necessary to his standing and respectability as a minister ; and charity, with that respect to which a minister, in regular standing, is entitled from his people, should prompt them to enable him to occupy that position. It is ridiculous, (and it would be unnecessary here to speak of it, were there not a disposition in some persons, otherwise well intentioned,) to be jealous of a minister's comforts. There are those, who

suspect him of pride, if he will not live in a very humble dwelling. A preacher of the gospel can put up with anything, if it be necessary, and be happy and contented at the same time, even as Paul was, in whatever state he was placed. And like the indefatigable Apostle of the Gentiles, he will even labor with his own hands at a secular calling to support himself, when necessary. At the same time, however, like his illustrious predecessor in office, he will be thankful for any aid and comfort rendered him by the church or churches.

Moreover, that to which benevolence prompts, the Lord, by his Apostle, enjoins; for it is "ordained, that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel." This is the forcible language of the Apostle, and those persons who deny the principle here inculcated, reject the express command of God. It is not simply with the Apostle they disagree. "Do ye not know," says Paul, "that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel." It is true, Paul did not use this power which he had from the Lord, to exact his support from the Church, so far as he might have used it; for he did not wish to appear to his missionary churches, which he had established, and which were yet weak in faith, to be "preaching for money." He says, "But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me; for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." Yet, he plainly intimates, that charity and gratitude to God for the benefits which they, the hearers of the gospel, receive, should stimulate them to benevolence in this respect. "If we," says he, "have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" He

does not press upon them to "freely give," any farther than they are convinced that it is their duty to give.

With that noble generosity, which should characterize, to some extent, every true minister of Jesus Christ, Paul sacrificed honor and distinction among his countrymen, and perhaps wealth and affluence, and then preached the gospel without charge, in order to give it a start, often laboring with his own hands, in the capacity of a "tent-maker," to supply his temporal necessities. Notwithstanding all this, no one of "the twelve" is more full in giving directions with regard to "ministering to the saints," and urging them "to abound in grace." He urged the performance of this duty, upon the score of true Christian charity. He urged, that it should be performed from love to God and his cause; and not from respect merely to himself, as a man. He says of the churches of Macedonia, which, beyond their power, were willing of themselves to contribute, "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave themselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." They were liberal from love to God, and to the people of God as such; from love to the Church and the welfare of souls. And thus Paul directed them to act. "I speak," he says, "not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your *love*."

The high claims of the glory of God, and not mere respect for man, are the true motives to Christian benevolence. Love, the all constraining love of Christ, should prompt to its exercise. "Good will, carried out in action, is lovely and respectable and virtuous, when done from sympathy and natural goodness of disposition. It is pious or religious, however, only when done from love to God." Love, springing from a conviction of the obligations he is under, and not a slavish fear, accompanied with a reluctant obedience, should move the Christian to the performance of this duty

toward his pastor. There should be a willing mind first, and then the act. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudingly, or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." The Christian should consider himself as a steward, and not as a lord of his possessions, and should be willing to impart of his abundance, to his pastor, and to the poor of the congregation. He should be willing to share with others, and especially with the household of faith, according as God has given him increase. The church-member, as well as the minister, should consider himself, with all he has and is, as consecrated to God. He should be willing to be anything, to do anything, and to go any place, which God by his word and providence may indicate to him. How impressive are the words of the Saviour to a pious mind: "Freely ye have received, freely give." And how forcibly does the Apostle reiterate the "same mind which was also in Christ Jesus," when he says, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

These are some of the motives and principles, which should urge to liberality in supporting the gospel minister. They should do this, not because liberality, in this respect alone, constitutes Christianity; but because it is one of the evidences of religion in those who profess it. Thus Paul represents it. He every where praises it. He holds it up as a sign of living Christian faith and active Christian love. "Moreover, brethren," he says, when he is about to enjoin liberality, and brings in this example, "we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia, how that, in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Again: "For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast to you of them of

Macedonia, that Achia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many." Prompted as they were, by a Christian benevolence of spirit, he considered it superfluous to write to them, "as touching the ministering to the saints." He knew their charity from their fruits.

We make these observations, not because we believe any to whom they are addressed, deny their obligation to support their pastor in form; but because we believe there is a negligence in the performance of this duty, and because we believe some deny the obligation in fact. And what we wish to make clear is, that those who do not let their light shine in this direction, show no signs of the Christian life—the life of faith. How can that man call himself a Christian, who does not love the Church, nor the Bible enough, to induce him to contribute toward the support of the pastor, who has been especially set apart to explain and enforce the gospel? How can he claim the appellation of a child of God, who does not love God so much as to support the cause of God with his substance, which God has given him? "If any man seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" There is a contradiction in such conduct, which cannot be explained away.

The covetousness of the human heart is great, and let no one suppose, that he is free from the danger of it. It dwells in every human breast, and is the root of all evil; "for the love of money," or that which money will procure, "is the root of all evil, which, while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith." It is the selfish appropriation of the blessings, which God has given us, that leads to resistance to his commands. To such an extent is this sometimes the case, that some, rather than give of their "carnal things" to the support of a minister of the gospel, will lose their souls—sell them for a few dollars and cents—and

deny themselves the privilege of using the means of grace. I have seen persons, apparently frightened away from the preaching of the gospel, by the mere mention of money. Even church-members, in some cases, rather than pay their pew rent, or salary to the pastor, will absent themselves from the house of worship. Dear reader, I hope and pray, that the grace of God will not suffer you to fall as low as this. I trust that you will be prompted, by your Christian vows, and your Christian love, to come up to the measure of your duty, and your ability, in aiding with your means and your prayers, him, who sustains to you the dearest and most intimate of all relations in the congregation, viz: that of a pastor.

But I take it for granted, that you are sufficiently convinced of your obligations in the direction to which I have adverted. The natural inquiry which may next arise, is, How shall I best accomplish the will of God in respect to these obligations? Without going into an extended discussion of systematic benevolence, I will merely suggest a plan, which seems to me to be both Scriptural and feasible. It is important that you should have *some* plan by which to regulate your contributions to benevolent objects in general, and that you should give to each object, in proportion as their merits demand. There should, however, not only be *some* plan or system adopted; but it should also be conscientiously and habitually carried out in practice; otherwise very little will be accomplished by means of it. It should be made a part of our business to make provision for the discharge of this duty, just as it is made our business "to provide things honest in the sight of all men," or to discharge our civil obligations. If the performance of this duty is left to chance, it will be very imperfectly done, or perhaps not done at all. Habit and system are very useful to render the performance of duty both easy and pleasant, and, at the same time, certain.

The plan which I would suggest, is, that you should give a certain portion of your income, whatever that income may be. Whenever you receive a part of your yearly wages, if you be a laborer,—or your money for your produce, if you be a farmer,—or your profits, if you be a merchant,—or your rents, if you be a property holder,—lay aside a portion of it for benevolent purposes. Let this portion be as little, or as much as your conscience will allow it to be, say one tenth, which was the custom under the Jewish dispensation. Then divide this portion again, as you may see proper, say so much to your pastor, so much to seminaries and colleges, so much to missions, and so much to newspapers and periodicals, &c. The application of this plan may vary somewhat, according to circumstances. If so situated, you can make your appropriation every week on the Lord's day, and thus give to it the more of a religious character, by accompanying it with your prayers.

The direction of the Apostle is as follows: "On the first day of the week, let every man lay by him in store, as the Lord hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The spirit of this injunction, at least, should be obeyed, by selecting stated times for laying aside what we can devote to charitable purposes, not allowing it to be used for any other purpose, and then giving only as we have, and feel able to give, when we may be called upon. The Apostle enjoins upon the disciples to contribute according to their increase, and according as the Lord has prospered them. If, however, we lay not by in store, and give no thought to the subject beforehand, we cannot obey this injunction. If this conduct does not evidence a want of a willing mind, it at least shows a want of wisdom. It is a neglecting of the order, which wisdom dictates, and it renders us unable to give according to our ability. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a

man hath, and not according to that he hath not." But though you have a willing mind, if you have no system of benevolence, you may squander that which you might otherwise appropriate. In making your appropriation to your pastor, it may be well to read the fourth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, which contains an incomparably excellent exhortation to all goodness. It is, perhaps, the most pathetic and significant of all Paul's writings. In this, the concluding part of the Epistle, he pours out his whole heart in the most affectionate manner.

A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO IS INFLUENCED BY THE CONSIDERATION OF HIS RELATION TO HIS PASTOR, AND TO THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.

Father of mercies, I humbly confess, that I am a sinner, and that the greatness of thy goodness should lead me to repentance for my sins. I beseech thee to remove the blindness of my mind and the hardness of my heart, that I may be enabled to behold the light of the glorious gospel. May the ingratitude, which I have hitherto manifested, be forgiven me, and may I, from this time forth, have a lively sense of my obligations, and an abiding conviction, that it is my duty to live, not unto myself, but unto him who died for me and rose again. May the inestimable blessings of the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, produce in me a heartfelt gratitude, and may I show my gratitude for these blessings, by attending to a preached gospel, and honoring the ordinances of thy house, which are designed to convey these inestimable benefits to mankind; and by leading a holy and blameless life in all godliness and honesty. May I prize more and more the gospel, as the power of God unto salvation, and the preaching of that gospel, as the means of bringing to my remembrance the things that belong to my peace.

And grant, O Lord, that the sacred relation which I sustain to my pastor may not be broken, and its holy and blessed associations destroyed by any "root of bitterness;" but may I ever remain, by thy grace, in a position where I may avail myself of all its benefits and privileges. Forbid, O Lord, that charity should be destroyed, and enmity exist, where love should be supreme. Forbid, that any sin or imperfection, in myself, or in my pastor, should prevent the cordial interchange of sympathy and prayer. But grant that mutual confidence and mutual efforts to promote the cause of our common Lord and Master, may ever characterize our intercourse and conduct. May he, who is placed over me as my spiritual shepherd, be made a blessing to me, by the spiritual truth, which shall come from his lips. Be mouth and wisdom to him, that he may rightly divide the word of truth and give to each his portion in due season. May he bring out of the treasury of thy word, things new and old, for the edification of the body of Christ. Be thou his strength and shield. Protect and support him in his arduous duties, and may he cry aloud and spare not. May he proclaim thy truth without fear or favor, or expectation of reward from men.

And may I, the recipient of so many favors, "esteem him very highly in love for his work's sake." May I ever be ready and willing to minister to his necessities, according as thou shalt prosper me. May the love I bear toward thee constrain me to liberality toward thy servant. May not the "love of money" prevent me from performing my duty. May not the earthly stream of avarice prevail against the heavenly fountain of charity. But help thou me, O Lord, to make a full surrender of myself to thy service. Neither may aught which I possess, be considered as my own, but as only lent by thee, to be used and appropriated as thou, in thy wisdom, shalt dictate. To thee, O Lord, would I give myself, with all I have, and all I am, to be used to thy glory. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN THE CONGREGATION, CONTINUED: HIS DUTY TO PROMOTE CHURCH PSALMODY.

Another duty devolving on the church-member, is that of contributing his aid to the promotion of congregational and choral, or choir singing. When we consider the excellence and importance of this part of divine service, it is evidently a cause of deep regret, that it is so much neglected. What is more edifying, than the voice of melody ascending in praise and thanksgiving to God? Next to the preaching of the gospel, it is the most important means of building up the soul in faith, hope and love. The best sentiments of the pious mind are expressed in the psalms and hymns and spiritual songs of the Church. It is this, which makes the Psalms of David such a rich source of consolation and strength to the Christian. They contain all the facts and doctrines of the Bible, expressed in poetic style, by striking comparisions and pathetic exclamations—by touches of thought which strike the heart, that deep fountain of feeling and reservoir of faith; that centre of the soul where Christ works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is not without good reason, that we frequently hear church-members say, "I would as leave hear a good hymn sung, as to hear a sermon." We can appeal to the church-member himself, whether church singing is not almost, if not entirely, equal in usefulness to the preaching of the word. We doubt not, that each one has experienced sufficient of the benefits of church-music, to appreciate its importance.

So essential is it, as we conceive, that, without good singing, the services of the sanctuary lose half their value. It is not in the nature of man, to be deprived of so useful a vehicle for conveying and receiving spiritual benefits, as is music, without great detriment to his spiritual welfare.

As might be supposed and as was natural, from the time God's people were first associated in families and tribes—from Miriam, and Moses, and David, down to the present time—religious singing received a large share of attention. Among the first instances of collective religious singing on record, is that of Moses and the Israelites, at the time when they had passed through the Red Sea, and safely encamped on the other side, having escaped from Pharaoh and his army. See Exodus 15. "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake saying, I will sing unto the Lord; for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation," &c. "And Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord; for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea," &c. On this occasion, Moses and the children of Israel celebrated the signal deliverances, which God wrought in their behalf, and called up to their remembrance the long bondage to which they had been subjected, and how God, with a high hand and an outstretched arm, brought them out of Egypt and out of the house of bondage. Ever afterwards, this song of Moses was a favorite song with the Israelites. And who will say, that it did not keep in lively remembrance the events spoken of?

This song, however, was not only intended to praise God for that temporal deliverance. It also had a more extended

significance. It was designed likewise to give thanks to God for spiritual deliverances through Jesus, the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. All these events were types of better things to come; and all these deliverances were types of deliverance from sin. Thus, this song is spoken of in the fifteenth chapter of Revelations, where it is said to be used to express the victories which the saints obtain over the powers of darkness. Thus the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb become one song. In this view, the song of Moses becomes still more interesting; for as deliverances from sin occur daily and repeatedly, the song of Moses and all the songs of Zion come to be invested with new interest and importance daily. It was with this view, in reference to spiritual blessings, no doubt, that all the pious Israelites engaged in singing the praises of God.

From this time onward the Israelites praised God in song in their assemblies; and after the setting up of the tabernacle in the wilderness, the tribe of Levi was set apart for this very service, as well as for assisting the priests in the sacrifices. The business of psalmody was thus scrupulously attended to, while the Levites led the song. Psalmody was afterward greatly cultivated among the Jews, as an art and a science. Asaph and others composed psalms, and especially David, who, by way of distinction, was called "the sweet singer of Israel." The manner in which David appreciated church psalmody, may be seen in many of his psalms, and especially in the 122nd and 135th. "I was glad, when they said unto me; Let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem," &c. "Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good; sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant," &c. Such were the sentiments of king David with regard to this part of divine service—a man who, for his pious disposition, as it seems, received the appellation of being a man after God's

own heart. Our hearts are drawn to him as a worthy example in the house of God.

We remember a character in a certain congregation, who occupied the position of chorister or clerk. We knew him when his head was silvered with age, and by his sweet voice and his ardent and continued devotion in the congregation, he was endeared to us in a more than ordinary degree. When subsequently calamities came over this congregation, and the news reached his ear that it was dissolved by the action of Classis, he, as we were informed, wept tears of sorrow in view of the sad intelligence. How much endeared must David have been to those who heard his voice, and whose prayer ascended for the peace of Jerusalem, and who wept bitter tears when Absalom, his son, compelled him to leave the city?

The manner of conducting the singing in the temple service was such as was calculated for edification and comfort. It was in accordance with the laws of nature and of God. The nature of the human mind is such as to be pleased and edified with order and harmony. As has before been noticed, the Levites, by divine command, were set apart for this service. To them was committed the duty of leading in singing. At the sound of the silver trumpets, they, as well as the priests, were called to their stations. As the priests proceeded to the temple and the altar with the sacrifice, the great bell was rung to warn the absent priests to come to worship, and the absent Levites to come to sing. At the conclusion of the sacrifice and other offerings, the Levites began the song of praise; and, at every pause in the music, the trumpets sounded and the people worshipped. See Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible.

There is no doubt, however, that the whole congregation engaged, to some extent, in singing, especially in shouting the chorus, whatever it may have been, during the intervals

indicated by the word Selah. The 150th Psalm is proof, that the whole audience of the people sang praises to God, or at least, that they joined in the chorus of hosanna or hallelujah. In the last verse of this psalm, the Psalmist says: "Let everthing that hath breath, praise the Lord," which is thus commented upon by Horne: "The breath of natural life, which God hath breathed into our nostrils, and the breath of that new and eternal life, which he hath given us through Christ Jesus our Lord, should be returned in hallelujahs. And then the Church, composed of many different members, all actuated, like the pipes of a well-tuned organ, by the same Spirit, and conspiring together in perfect harmony, would become one great instrument, sounding forth the praises of God most high."

There were singers, distinguished as such, composed of Levites. They are spoken of in the seventh chapter of Nehemiah, where the different classes of the Hebrews and their number, who returned from the captivity in Babylon, are specified. Among them were, "the singers; the children of Asaph, a hundred forty and eight." But it seems, that these merely led the psalm, and that the whole congregation were at liberty, and exhorted, to praise God in singing.

None were restrained from contributing their aid in swelling the notes of praise to God in the assembly of the upright. The language of the Psalms seems to imply this. David speaks of praising in the temple, and exhorts others to do the same. "Praise ye the Lord," he says. "I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation." Again, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. Ye that fear the Lord, praise him; all ye seed of Jacob, glorify him. My praise shall be of thee, in the great congregation; I will pay my vows before them that fear him."

It only remains for us to say, with respect to the manner of singing by the Jews, that it appears, during the intervals in the music, there was a shouting of the chorus or choruses. Perhaps there was a promiscuous exclamation of praise and adoration of some kind or other by the people, not expressed, but merely intimated by the word Selah. When the singing ceased, the assembly shouted sometimes the Amen, and at other times, Hallelujah, together with other expressions, accompanied with interjections, expressive of their emotions; and then bowed their heads in worship. Thus, in the 47th Psalm, which is supposed to have been first sung on the occasion, when the Ark of the covenant was carried up into the temple, after the word Selah, the following language occurs: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises: Sing praises unto our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: Sing ye praises with understanding." The singing of psalms by the Jews, appears to have been very hearty. It appears to have been full of that enthusiasm, which the pious mind feels, when worshipping God in spirit and in truth. Notwithstanding this, however, there was order and system in their singing.

How well the Jews appreciated the privilege of worshipping God in the temple, may be seen by the 137th Psalm, which was composed in reference to the seventy years' captivity. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion," &c. So also, by the repentance of the remnant, after the restoration, as recorded in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Another proof, that the custom of singing obtained among the Jewish people generally, is the fact, that it was practiced by Christ and his disciples in their assemblies. After the celebration of the last supper, it is said, in Matthew 26: 30, "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out

into the mount of Olives." Singing probably was practiced in the families, synagogues, and temple, by the mass of the people, from Moses and David to the time of our Saviour. This custom was not abrogated by our Saviour; but, on the contrary, it was one of those things which he came to fulfill —to carry out more extensively; for now each one was to be his own priest and Levite, to some extent, "to show forth the praises of him that called them to his kingdom and glory. It was enjoined by the Apostle upon Christians, to edify each other with sacred music. He says: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly: in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." He also directs, that this part of divine worship should be conducted in systematic order, for the purpose of edification. (See 14th chapter 1st Corinthians.) After speaking of prophesying, which seems to include singing, as well as preaching, and also of speaking in an unknown tongue, he says, "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

From what can be gathered from the New Testament Scriptures, it appears that the primitive Christians, in their associated capacity, in their meetings for edification, paid strict attention to sacred music—animating each other with the voice of song, and making melody in their hearts to the Lord. How could it be otherwise, when they had such glorious themes as the glad tidings of salvation furnished them? That Saviour who was introduced into the world with the song of angels, should he not be praised and supplicated by men, whom he came to redeem? How could it be otherwise, when the evangelical prophet, Isaiah, who had so much to say and prophesy about the gospel times, wrote his prophecies in poetic style, and constantly affirmed, that these

days should be distinguished for sacred music? Then shall "the tongue of the dumb sing," said he. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah. We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. "Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth." This is spoken in reference to the heathen, who should be called by the gospel, and sing praises to God. In reference to the good tidings of Christ's kingdom, he again says: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing. Break forth into joy; sing together ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

How could it be possible, that the Christian Church, in view of what the prophet describes her to be, should be silent in her assemblies, and neglect the injunction of the Apostle to "speak to herself in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; singing and making melody in her heart to the Lord?" Such a state of the Church could only appear under some existing adverse circumstances, which should be deeply deplored, and should lead to earnest self examination and reform. Such a state of the Church could not appear, except in connection with a spirit of luke-warmness,

and "a falling away." But the Church never entirely neglected sacred music. The promise of the Saviour, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," is a security against entire neglect; for where Christ is present in majesty, grace and spirit, the heart will be prompted to sing and admonish in sacred songs.

In the primitive Church, immediately succeeding the age of the Apostles, with all its trials and disadvantages, but with the plentiful supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ, and in the freshness of faith and first love, church singing was not neglected. Augusti, in his "Antiquities of the Christian Church," translated by Coleman, has the following language: "The Psalms were a collection of sacred songs, and were used in their (the Jews) temple service, like our modern collections of Psalms and Hymns. The use of sacred music in religious worship was derived from the Jews, and the Psalms of the sacred Scriptures were uniformly used by the primitive Christians, as songs to be sung. Some one or more led the singing, and the whole congregation united their voices in the chorus. Sometimes they constituted two divisions, and sung responses to each other, and at other times, it is probable, that all sung in unison. Their worship was conducted by the reading of the Scriptures, and singing of the Psalms alternately. Certain Psalms were sung also on certain occasions prescribed by the bishops."

Of the singers or Precentors, he says: "The appointment of singers and choristers takes its origin from the importance in which the singing of the psalms and hymns was held, not only in the temple and synagogue service of the Jews, but in the apostolic and primitive churches. We have the fullest and most satisfactory evidence of the early and universal introduction of this part of religious worship into the Christian Church; Ephs. 5: 19, 20; Col. 3: 16; and of the appointment of singers as a distinct class of

church officers. These went up into the singers seats and sung from a book. The object of this restriction was to correct abuses and suitably to regulate this part of worship. The *subjects* of their psalmody were submitted to the control of the bishops or presbyters. But all that related to the *performance* of the music, *as an art*, was left to the singers."

In a note, the translator says: "Bingham asserts, that, from the apostolic age, for several centuries, the whole body of the Church united in singing, and that these *canonical singers* were only a temporary provision to regulate and restore the singing to some tolerable degree of harmony, and that it continued to be the usage of the Church, for the whole assembly to join in singing. For this opinion he quotes various authorities."

Of the singers, Augusti further says: "Though they have not been classed with the priesthood, they have ever been held in great respect, as appears from the establishment of schools of sacred music, and from the peculiar attention which was paid to them; especially to the instructors of them. Such schools were established as early as the sixth century, and became common in various parts of Europe, particularly in France and Germany. These schools were very much patronized by Gregory the Great, under whom they obtained great celebrity. From them originated the famous *Gregorian Chant*, a plain system of church music which the choir and the people sung in unison. The prior, or principal, of these schools, was a man of great consideration and influence."

This historical sketch may serve to show, at least, that sacred music has received, as we before stated, a large share of attention from the people of God in all ages, and especially, during those periods, when the Church was most awake and active and alive by the power of faith and a divine life.

True, some of the Reformers of the sixteenth century dispensed with Church music for a while, owing to its having been so much abused, by becoming formal and lifeless, being composed only of organs and a little heartless chanting and singing by a few persons. But subsequently there was a true revival of this ancient and heaven favored custom of Church singing in the Reformed Church of Switzerland, as well as in that of the Palatinate of the Rhine, and of the Lutheran Church. It is when the Church is revived to a living and wakeful state, that the "songs of Zion" are the sweetest, and most hearty and soul-moving. Where church psalmody is cultivated and practiced in the worshipping congregation, it is a good indication that the life-giving presence of the Saviour is realized.

And now, we have simply to add, that it is the duty of each church-member to do his part in promoting the interests of the congregation in this respect. And though we do not object to choral, or choir singing, it seems to us, that the congregation should join in the exercise. It certainly appears to be most consistent with the idea of a worshipping congregation, that all the members thereof—who possibly can—should help to sing the adoring and supplicating songs of Zion.

It is expected that the minister will give all his time and attention to the work of the ministry—be instant in season and out of season, in leading the devotions of the congregation in prayer, and in preaching. But is it not also the duty of the members of the congregation to do their part, according to the direction of the Apostle, by letting "the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts to the Lord?" Undoubtedly, the communion of saints requires that each one should use his gifts, not only for his own ben-

efit, but to the advantage of other members. When we see a professor of religion, making no efforts to sing in the congregation, assembled for worship, we can attribute his silence to nothing else but mental or spiritual laziness. His mind is so occupied with worldly things during the week, that he has no heart to worship God on the Sabbath. He neglects to be "diligent in business, *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*" He plunges into the business of the world, with a God-forgetfulness, that leaves him no time to think, that it is his business to praise and pray to God. This low state of piety, together with the very slight feeling of obligation, is what renders our Church singing so defective at the present day.

It is really painful to see how this exercise is permitted to drag in many congregations. We sometimes censure Methodists and others, for their loud and fanatical singing; but I had much rather hear such singing than the feeble and lifeless singing just referred to. We sometimes object to the congregational singing of our European German brethren, because of its formality, as we suppose; but do we mend the matter, by not singing at all? For my part, I have never been more edified at any time, than by the soul-moving music of a pious German congregation; and it is my opinion, that it would be well for some church-members to make a visit to some congregation, where congregational singing is practiced, in order that they might be stimulated to loosen their tongues, and try to sing. Surely if this matter were viewed as it ought to be, we would all say with the Psalmist, "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." That is, Let every intelligent creature, which has a voice and can guide that voice at all, join in singing praise to Jehovah.

To the reader, I would say, If you have that all-embraing love, which is the active principle of a life of faith, you

will deem it a privilege, as well as a duty, to engage in this delightful part of religious exercises. You may say, I cannot sing. I have no ability to sing. But this may be rather the languague of diffidence and modesty, than of fact. I know from experience, that very little ability may be so improved by practice, that it may contribute something to swell the note of praise. Some persons will tell us, they cannot pray, and yet they can converse freely. It is a fact, that some, who have little or no talent for music, by dint of resolution and perseverance, come to be tolerable singers, whilst others, who have much better talent than they, never sing at all. This goes to show clearly, that, where there is a willingness, almost any one can learn to sing, and where there is sincere piety, the utmost diffidence can be overcome.

Jonathan Edwards remarks on this point, that, "as it is the command of God, that all should sing, so all should make conscience of *learning* to sing; as it is a thing that cannot be decently performed at all without learning. Those, therefore, (where there is no natural inability,) who neglect to *learn* to sing, *live in sin*, as they neglect what is necessary in order to their attending to one of the ordinances of God's worship." I would advise you, therefore, to seek to cultivate that state of mind, which will make the path of duty both plain and easy. For where there is no spiritual mind, the performance of Christian duty will be an up hill business entirely. Zion will not prosper, unless "the people have a mind to work," and this mind must be produced by a lively faith, and the blessing of God. "The preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue, in man, is from the Lord." You have, consequently, every inducement to urge you to the cultivation of holiness of heart—to the cultivation of a state of mind alive to the honor and glory of God. As you value the prosperity of Zion, and

the peace and comfort of your own soul, therefore, make it a matter of conscience, to cultivate the art and spirit of religious psalmody.

A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO DESIRES SPIRITUALITY OF MIND, AND DIVINE ASSISTANCE IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS DUTY, IN RELATION TO CHURCH-PSALMODY.

Almighty and ever blessed God, who art praised and worshipped by the bright retinue of angels in heaven, who cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Omnipotent, which was, and is, and is to come;" I beseech thee to bless thy word to the sanctification of my mind. May the word of Christ dwell in me richly, in all wisdom. May I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. May Christ live in me, and may it be to me indeed to live, Christ, and to die, gain. May I be enabled to keep my conversation in heaven, from whence I look for the appearing of the great God and my Saviour, Jesus Christ. May the aspirations for heaven and the glories to be revealed in the last time, keep my mind above the cares and affections of the world.

Grant, O Lord, that while I am a member of the Church militant, I may be enabled, by thy divine assistance, to engage in thy worship in spirit and in truth. May I behold thy glory in the sanctuary, and may my mouth show forth thy praise. May my heart be inspired by thy good Spirit, and may my lips not refrain from engaging in thy praise. And may all, in every place, praise thee. May the voice of melody ascend from every hill-top and valley, where thou hast recorded thy name, in anthems of praise to thee. May thy name be praised "from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same." May the tabernacle of God be with men everywhere, and may he dwell with them and be their God and they be his people. May the beauty of the Lord their God be upon them; and may they be clothed with the garment of praise. May Zion look forth, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." And unto thee, the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, shall be honor, praise, and dominion forever. Amen.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN THE CONGREGATION, CONTINUED: ATTENDANCE ON PUBLIC WORSHIP URGED.

In a previous chapter, we have said something about attendance on public worship. We shall here add some more particular directions.

It is presumed, that you feel it to be your duty, in a general way at least, to attend the meetings of the congregation for worship; and if you are in possession of that charity, of which we have spoken, you will also esteem it a privilege to do so. Still, there will be a disposition at times in you to make excuses, and excuses are very easily made, when there is a desire to be excused. Were it not for this disposition in many, to avail themselves of the privilege of absenting themselves from the house of God for slight reasons, it would be unnecessary to say anything on this point. The thin congregations, however, which sometimes are to be seen, sufficiently show the necessity of urging the importance of regular attendance.

"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," is a remark that is only too true in reference to many, who would make it an excuse for all delinquencies. One fruitful cause of this slothfulness of spirit, is, the unceasing engagement in worldly pursuits. Those who work from morning until night at their secular vocation, without taking their Bible or any other book in their hand, wherewith to fill their mind and awaken their spirit, will be very apt to excuse themselves for non-attendance at public worship. It is

right and proper, that we should be industrious in our worldly business; but it is wrong to give ourselves too exclusively to these matters, and thereby dampen our zeal and love for spiritual things. Industry in temporal things is a beautiful trait of character wherever it is found; and when it is accompanied with piety, it is still more lovely. If kept in subordination to spiritual interests, it will lead to a greater appreciation of religious blessings, and a more earnest mind in the performance of religious duties. The mind will spring forward with greater vigor, provided there is sufficient time taken for reflection and prayer.

A moderate industry, moreover, will accomplish more in the end, than that overwrought laboring which leaves no time for relaxation of the body, or the cultivation of the mind and the heart. "He that hasteth to be rich, hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him." "Be ye temperate in all things." Let not your mind be so occupied with the things of this world, that you can have no time nor heart to seek the things that are above, and to lay up treasures in heaven. The enjoyments of heaven will not be those of an idle, nor of a worldly mind. But a pleasing variety of praise, of contemplation, and of active pursuits in acquiring knowledge and doing good in some way or other, will probably engage the time and attention of the inhabitants of heaven. The cultivation of heavenly-mindedness can only be effected by the preaching of the gospel and the use of the sacraments, accompanied with meditation, thoughtfulness and prayer. But if the body is wearied by excessive labor, there will be no opportunity to effect this desirable end.

The excuse has been made by some, for not attending public worship on the Sabbath, (though we cannot conceive that it would be made by a truly pious mind,) that they can read the Bible at home; and as to the preaching of the gos-

pel, they will say, "We understand that already as well, perhaps, as the minister, and therefore, he cannot teach us anything. We know it all." But those who make this objection, forget that there is something peculiar in the preaching of the gospel. They forget, that the object of the gospel is twofold, viz: to bring to remembrance doctrines and duties, as well as to teach such as are not understood or known. Hence, the apostle Peter says: "Wherefore, I will not be negligent to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye already know them, and be established in the present truth." Again, "I will put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not." And Paul to Timothy says: "If thou put them in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ." Moreover, in the preaching of the gospel, there is a certain divine force which is calculated of itself to draw men to Christ. An influence of the Spirit is exerted, and impressions are made on those who hear, which will follow them, and be felt and remembered in the field, in the shop, in the counting-house, and in the silent meditations of the closet. The excuse, therefore, that it is not necessary to attend preaching is not valid. If you be a church-member, you should not think of making any such excuse, and if you love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity—if you have a relish for the institutions and blessings of religion, you *will* not do so.

Another motive for punctuality in attending the services of the sanctuary, is the divine will. It is the command and will of God, that we should observe the Sabbath, by attending to the established religious exercises. It is the benefits which God bestows, in connection with the means of grace, that render the Sabbath peculiarly hallowed. You should make it a matter of conscience to attend public worship.

You should ask yourself, "Do I love the Lord Jesus Christ, and shall I not obey him? Do I respect him, and shall I not meet him in the sanctuary, according to the engagements I have made with him?" Unless you feel in this manner, you will find a great many trifling excuses will be sufficient to keep you away from the meetings of God's people for worship. If you do not make it a conscientious matter to attend a regular ministry, you will probably enjoy yourself somewhere else better, than in the house of God; and you will, consequently, be in great danger of making shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience.

Though at times you may not enjoy the services of religious worship and the preaching of the word, or at most, very little, yet you will realize a benefit afterwards; you will have peace and comfort; your conscience will not condemn you, and when you return to your home, you will have a more lively remembrance of the "blessing of God, which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow therewith." This is the experience of many, who have gone to the house of God with prayerful and earnest hearts. They have done their duty, and God has blessed them in the way of duty. "The way of duty is the only way of safety," and though it may be a cross instead of an enjoyment at the time, yet afterward it will bring joy and peace. The very act of attending upon the preaching of the gospel will of itself make an impression of a good kind on the pious mind. And though he may not understand the language of the speaker, yet his very manner and voice will suggest thoughts to him of a profitable kind. Thus the Psalmist, when meditating, said, "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul." He that would enjoy a conscience void of offence toward God, and have much peace in his soul, must attend punctually on the ministrations of the sanctuary.

It is a lamentable fact, that those, whom we ought to see in the house of God on the Sabbath, are often absent; absent on that glorious day—the very thoughts of which should inspire them with reverence and awe—should urge them as with an irresistible impulse to do that which is well-pleasing in the Lord's sight. God requires them to be present in the sanctuary, when there is no lawful hindrance. It is not a matter of indifference with him, whether they attend as far as possible, the public worship of the sanctuary or not. He is well pleased, when he sees those who bear his name, respect him, and evidence their respect by attending regularly and punctually on the means of grace which he is willing and anxious to bestow. God is well pleased with that self-denying benevolence, which leads us to "give our goods to feed the poor," and "to minister to the necessity of the saints." He is well pleased with that pure and undefiled religion, which prompts us "to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions," and to aid and assist them; but he is also well pleased when we "keep ourselves unspotted from the world,"—well pleased with that Christian morality, which distinguishes us from the world, and is seen in our obedience to his commands; in our observance of religious duties, and in the Christian graces, which God bestows by the use of the means of grace.

The Lord, by the prophet Isaiah, says: "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday;" and also, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thy own ways, nor finding thy own pleasure, nor speaking thy own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord;—and I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the

Lord hath spoken it." What then must be the character of those who make light of the Sabbath and its accompanying duties? Surely they cannot claim to be good Christians, in this respect. Surely it is to be regretted, that some, who have been good Christians in some respects, should disregard the sanctity of the Sabbath; for nothing is more certain, than that piety will die out, where the Sabbath is neglected. If those, who absent themselves from the church on the Sabbath, had proper views and a living faith, they would embrace every opportunity to attend; they would then say, with the Psalmist, "I was glad, when they said, unto me: Let us go into the house of the Lord." If they really desired the help of God, to enable them to live a Christian life, they would seek that help in worship; for God "sends help from the sanctuary."

"I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help," was the language of those who believed in very deed, that God was in his earthly temple to bless those who come to render him thanks, and to receive his blessing. O how little respect do they show for the Lord of hosts, who stay away when his people meet for worship! A friend, (Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the uncircumcised—the enemies of God, rejoice!)—A friend comes to see them on Sabbath morning. They do not want to go away and leave him. That would be showing him too much disrespect. But the Lord is in his holy temple, and they are not present, though they have made engagements to meet him there. And thus, they do not scruple to show him that disrespect which they would not think of showing to their visiting neighbor. They virtually place the Lord on a level with their neighbor.

Perhaps they do not mean any disrespect. At least, they do not think it any disrespect to stay away from the place of worship, for such a cause. Visitors come seldom, and

the Sabbath comes often. Shocking! By such false reasoning, they connive at Sabbath breaking, and assist in doing it, and still call themselves Christians! Should they not rather eagerly embrace such an opportunity to vindicate the honor of their Lord, and politely invite their friend to accompany them to the place of worship, and thereby set a good example, whilst, at the same time, they would show no real disrepect to their friend? Such persons, however, are careless. They do not think much about what they are doing. They follow the habits and customs of the world, and set godliness and Christianity aside. Christ, stand thou there whilst we attend to these friends, is about the language of their minds, if not of their lips. Their duty would certainly be evident to themselves, if they would but reflect and believe. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is one of the ten commandments. Was not this day set apart in order to be devoted as much as possible to religious purposes? And is not, in the nature of the case, the duty of attending public worship included in this command?

But the real, true, last and principal cause of the absence of a proper appreciation of the services of the sanctuary, is, that those in whom it is found to exist, look upon the church as merely an assembly of men,—of human beings like themselves, worthy of no more respect than any other human beings; and on the minister as a mere man, worthy of no more respect than other men. Hence, when they go to church, they go on man's account. They do it as unto men, and not unto the Lord. No wonder, therefore, that the matter, as well as the manner of the minister, should fail to draw them to the sanctuary; and that their neighbor's company should be more acceptable than the ordinances of God's house. It cannot be otherwise, whilst they entertain such views as these. When the truth, which the preacher de-

clares, and the Lord, whose messenger he is, are left out of the account, it is easy to perceive what the result will be. If there is no regard for God, there will be no relish for his truth.

Let me advise the church-member, who may occasionally, and, to some extent, ignorantly, be guilty of the sin of disregarding the Lord, in the manner pointed out, to lay to heart the facts here presented. Let him show respect for the Lord, and let him respect the Lord's ministers and the Lord's people, for the Lord's sake, and his example will not be without its good effects. Let him cause his light thus to shine before men, that they may see his good works and glorify his Father who is in heaven. Let him not—if he has any of that charity which is the bond of perfectness—feel as if the bonds that bind him to the sanctuary are slight.

The services of the church on extraordinary occasions, are generally well attended; but these are of no permanent value, unless the ordinary services are also properly waited upon and appreciated. It is the ordinary rain which moistens and fructifies the earth, as well as the storm and thunder-shower. So, in like manner, it is the ordinary grace, in connection with the ordinary means, which enlivens and fructifies the garden of the Lord; as well as the extraordinary and powerful awakening on extraordinary occasions, and in connection with extraordinary means. The extraordinary should grow forth from the ordinary, and be connected with it; and so it does and is, when the Church is in a proper state. It is when the members of the Church pray in their closets, and in their prayer-meeting, if they have one, in earnest wrestling prayer, that extraordinary effects are produced by the ordinary as well as extraordinary means.

Prayer is an ordinary means of securing the favor of

heaven and the blessing of God. It never can be dispensed with. In times of defection and deadness in the Church, God reserves his praying Elijahs, whose decision and firmness vindicate the honor of the Lord, and whose prayers preserve the Church and bring about a revival of faith and love. Prayer is the first and last exercise of a renewed soul in the conflict of faith.

"Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,
Returning from his ways.
* * * * *

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gate of death,
He enters heaven with prayer."

Social prayer has its advantages, both by way of quickening the faith of those who may engage in it, and of moving the hand of Jehovah to bestow his blessing. Prayer-meetings should, therefore, be established, and attended by the members of the Church. It is not necessary to show, that prayer-meetings are of divine appointment. It is sufficient to know, that the Church has always had prayer-meetings of some kind or other, and that they are perfectly in harmony with the nature and spirit of Christianity. It was in accordance with the nature of religion and the necessities of the case, that the disciples of our Lord, after his ascension to heaven, were prompted to associate "in prayer and supplication" before the day of Pentecost, and afterward to "continue in breaking of bread and in prayer." And it is presumed, that all should be convinced by their example, of the use and importance of social prayer, or prayer-meetings. It is not required, that we should pray with a fanatical spirit, or get into the habit of making as much noise as possible; neither is it expected, that we should be lukewarm, uninterested and doubting in our prayers.

The rules of the Apostle as given in 1 Cor. 14, and Col. 2, should be studied.

The primitive Church continued to have meetings for prayer and edification. When Peter was cast into prison, prayer was made without ceasing of the Church for him; and Paul frequently asks his church-members to pray for him, as well as gives directions how to conduct their meetings. "The primitive Christians in all their assemblies, sought to excite and quicken their devotional sentiments by singing and prayer;" "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts to the Lord." It seems to be in reference to meetings of this kind, that Paul, in Heb. 10, after speaking of Christ as the sacrifice for sin, and of "our having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new way," says: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another." Those, who attend the meetings of the church punctually and continuing, can take encouragement from these words of Paul; and as I am addressing the church-member, permit me to urge the exhortation of the Apostle, "not to forsake the assembling of yourselves together."

You may object, that you cannot take part in the prayers; but it is sufficient to reply, that all are not required to lead, and you can take part in spirit, if you cannot in outward expression. You can take part in singing; and many of the hymns are supplicating hymns, and hymns of praise. You can, therefore, waft your supplications to heaven in the voice of melody. Thus the primitive Christians did. "The psalms and hymns, of which mention is made in the ancient Church, are evidently none else than prayers mingled with ascriptions of praise to God for his goodness, designed to

promote and express becoming sentiments of piety. Their songs were but joyful prayers, and as such were transferred into the church from the synagogue and temple worship of the Jews." Even the Lord's prayer, and some portions of the New Testament, and the Apostles' creed, and other similar productions, were sung or chanted.

You can find no excuse, in the nature of the meeting, for not being present. Even your presence alone will be beneficial to yourself and to others. It is the individual, who is constantly and punctually in his place, that is the shining light in the Church. It is to him that its members look and are encouraged to go on in the path of duty. It is in him, that they see love to God and his Church, and by the loveliness and stability of his piety, they are enabled to thank God for his mercy. If you will but punctually and conscientiously attend to these duties and means of grace, and thereby become zealous of good works—zealous for the honor and glory of God, you will be enabled to stand in the evil day, the day of trial and temptation, and to come forth as gold tried in the fire; for you will have your days of fierce trial and conflict with Satan and your own evil heart.

A PRAYER FOR A CHURCH-MEMBER, IN REFERENCE TO ATTENDANCE ON PUBLIC WORSHIP.

Lord, I beseech thee to imbue my mind with zeal for the honor of thy holy name. Destroy that selfish propensity, which would lead me to misappropriate my time and energies. May the benefits of thy glorious grace, and the honor of thy name ever be more dear to me than either clothing, food and all earthly blessings, or the praise and good will of erring men. O! forbid, that unbelief should hinder my faithful attendance on the means of grace; and grant, dear Lord, that the causes of unbelief,—those sins which leave a lethargy upon the soul,—may be removed.

Whatever may be the perplexities, which may be brought upon me, may I never forget to seek thy favor and help; for vain is the help of man. May I not fly to other and unlawful sources for peace of mind, when thou hast opened a fountain in the house of David for sin and uncleanness. Preserve me, O Lord! from indifference, and may the interests of thy cause and kingdom ever lie near my heart. May I always seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, that I may repair with a joyful heart to the sanctuary on the Sabbath day. And may faith be mixed with what I hear, that I may be filled with the fulness of God, and fully prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

May the hours of worship upon the Sabbath, and the hours of silent meditation, afford a taste of heavenly joys. And when I have done all that, by thy grace and assistance, I may be enabled to do, may I confess, that I am an unprofitable servant. I have done that which it was my duty to do, and no more, whilst I have not been able to render any satisfaction for the long list of sins of omission and commission, and for the pardon of which I can look only to Jesus, who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last; the all in all to me.

May this mind be in me, whilst I am a membar of the Church militant. And may I persevere in every good word and work, growing in every Christian grace, and adorning the doctrine of God my Saviour. And when I shall be removed by the hand of death from this to another sphere of existence, may I enter the Church triumphant through him that bought me with his blood; and to thee shall be rendered praises everlasting. Amen.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE USE AND IMPORTANCE OF SABBATH SCHOOLS, AND THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN REGARD TO THEM.

SABBATH Schools, in their present form, are of but comparatively recent date, having originated within the last century; but the principle of the Sabbath school and the object to be attained by means of it, are not new. It is designed to assist the pastor and the parent, in the religious teaching of the children under their care. Under the Jewish dispensation—endeared to us by the recollection of its being the preparatory school for the Christian dispensation, and by the recollection of God's using it for the instruction and guidance of his dear people, through the twilight of ignorance, into the knowledge of himself—parents were required to speak to their children of the history of the Church, of the law, and the ceremonies of worship, which the scribes were to explain more fully in the synagogue.

Under the Christian dispensation, parents are required to instruct, advise, and command their children after them, whilst children are enjoined to obey their parents in the Lord. Pastors are required to teach all nations, giving candidates for church-membership that immediate instruction and guidance, which are necessary to discipleship. "Go ye, therefore, and teach, (that is, disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," implies the instruction of the young, and the use of the best means to bring *them* to understand their relation to the Church and to God. In the primitive

Church, the obligation to this duty was felt, and every effort was made to pre-occupy the minds of the young with God and heaven, and to teach them that they belong to God, and that to consecrate themselves to him, was the best thing they could do. Out of this important duty grew the custom of catechetical instruction in the primitive Church; for it was felt, that, if the Church would contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, the membership must be well instructed in the spirit and history of the Christian faith.

During the Reformation times, the religious education of the young, was attended to much in the same manner; only in addition to family instruction and pastoral catechization, parochial schools were instituted. These schools have been much of the glory of the Church ever since. In them was fostered that spirit of religious inquiry and literary investigation, which has made Protestant nations the leading powers in the history of the world. In them was laid the foundation of that religious knowledge, which has shaped the course of many pious minds, and guided them through this world, and determined their charaeter and position in the world to come.

But it remained for more recent times to call forth the Sabbath school in its present form. Mr. Raikes, a pious gentleman of England, seeing many of the children of the poor breaking the Sabbath, and growing up without religious instruction, conceived the plan of collecting them together on the Sabbath, and teaching them the principles and facts of Christianity. And so well did the plan succeed, that Sabbath schools have become a common means of religious training in all Protestant communities. Many, who are now living, as well as many who have gone to their reward, can date some of their first and most happy religious impressions, from the time they attended on the Sabbath school.

These schools have been of incalculably great advantage to the rising generation, in time past, and they are, no doubt, destined to be of still more advantage to them, in time to come. The improvements which may be made in them, and the zeal and faith with which they may be conducted, will make them a successful means for the conversion and sanctification of the young, beyond anything that has yet been conceived. They are not intended, however, to be a substitute for parental instruction and pastoral care ; but are designed to be an auxiliary to aid the parent and pastor in the discharge of their duty to lead the young mind into the knowledge of the truth. Neither are they intended to be a substitute for parochial schools. Parochial schools may accomplish a religious education to some extent; but Sabbath schools afford additional and greater facilities for instruction of a strictly religious kind. The propriety, use, and importance of Sabbath schools will not be questioned, when properly considered. They are in strict harmony with the design of the gospel, and are a most valuable medium for the accomplishment of one of the objects of the gospel, namely, the teaching of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Such being the nature and design of Sabbath schools, the duty of the church-member with regard to them is plain. It is his duty to do all in his power to promote the prosperity of the school connected with his congregation. Permit me to say a few words to you, who are a young member of the Church. It is presumed, that you have fully consecrated yourself to the Lord, and that you feel like saying, " Though there should be no other Christian in the world, yet would I be one ;" and with Joshua, " Let others do as they may, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." If you have that love to God, and the souls of your fellow mortals, which is a characteristic of every true child of God, you will desire to make yourself useful in every way possible. Here

then, in the Sabbath school, you can accomplish the desire of your heart, either by becoming a teacher or a scholar; and by your deportment and Christian spirit, you may become the medium of receiving, and conferring spiritual blessings. It will require some self-denial on your part to perform the labor of a teacher; for it will be a tax on your time and bodily ease, and often your labor may seem to be in vain. But no one knows how much good he is doing in any sphere. If he only labor in faith, he will receive his reward. God will bestow his blessing, perhaps, when you are dead and gone; only, therefore, sow your seed. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." "Be not weary in well doing; for, in due season, you shall reap, if you faint not."

A PRAYER FOR SABBATH SCHOOLS, AND FOR DIVINE AID TO LABOR IN THEM.

All-wise and glorious Jehovah, who dost often choose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, may thy blessing be richly bestowed upon the feeble institutions of religious education—the Sabbath schools, and make them a powerful means of pulling down the strong-holds of sin. May thy word be so used in them, that it may eminently serve to dissipate the darkness of ignorance, and introduce the rising generation into the light and liberty of thy children. May thy sun of righteousness arise upon them with healing in his beams, so that whilst a Paul plants and an Apollos waters, the increase may be abundantly bestowed. May the plants of thy moral vineyard be directed by these obscure and simple means, to Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life, and become engrafted into him really and truly, so that they

may eventually be transplanted to the paradise above, where they shall bloom with everlasting youth.

And, O Lord! grant me thy aid to labor in this highly favored, though simple and unpretending institution, the Sabbath school. Grant me zeal and faith to sow the seed of thy word, in order that I may labor, with the feelings of one, who desires to pluck immortal souls as brands from the burning; with the assurance that thou wilt employ these means to promote thy glory. Thou hast given assurance, that thy word shall not return unto thee void, but that it shall accomplish that which thou pleasest, and prosper in the thing whereunto thou hast sent it. With this assurance, therefore, may I labor in the simplicity of faith and love, and not be weary in well doing, nor despise the day of small things.

These petitions I present, O thou glorious Jehovah, in the name of Jesus my Mediator and Redeemer, to whom, with thee, the Father and the Holy Spirit, be praises everlasting. Amen.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN THE CONGREGATION, CONTINUED: HIS RELATION TO HIS FELLOW MEMBERS.

When you are introduced into the Church in full connection, you sustain to your brethren a relation of the most holy and interesting kind. You have so many interests and objects in common with them, that the relation is rendered very endearing to you. You have, therefore, many reasons to love them. "A new commandment," says the Saviour, "I give unto you, That ye love one another;" a commandment that may well be borne in mind at this day, when the love of many waxes cold; when, for some trifling cause, the bond of love is broken, and strife exists, where the injunction of the Apostle, "Be of one mind, live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you," should be realized.

1. You have reason to love your brethren, because you are partakers with them of the same spiritual life. Men love their countrymen, because they are partakers with them of a common national life. They have been brought up under the same political institutions and social customs, which have given their life that form which distinguishes them from other nations, and consequently they are attached to these institutions, and to those who are the bearers of them, and who are brought up and live under the customs and usages and institutions of their native land. This truth is practically realized in an especial manner, when they meet each other in a foreign land. Let citizens of the

United States meet in a distant territory, and among a strange people; and though they may have been indifferent to each other at home, and perhaps personally, strangers, yet the fact of their being fellow countrymen will bind them together in the strongest attachment. Let their eye meet the flag of their country waving in the breeze, and how ardent will be the affection for their country and its people. How endearing the words of the poet:

> "The star spangled banner, long may it wave,
> O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

In like manner, there is an attachment to our neighborhood and our immediate neighbors. Reared under the same social customs, and in the same vicinity, and in connection with the same current events, our life has received that impress and form, which endears to us our neighborhood and all connected with it. Thus also, is there an attachment to our family kindred; only the latter is much stronger than either of the former. The members of the same family are not only reared under the same influences; but the same blood also courses through their veins; the same immediate physical life pervades their bodies. They are endeared to each other by family ties; they are brethren, and love each other as such.

Equally real and living are the ties, which subsist between Christian brethren; and much higher and holier is their relationship. They are related, not by physical, but by spiritual descent. They are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God." They have the same parentage. They are one with the Father, with Jesus, and with one another; and for the realization of this oneness, Jesus prays in one of his last prayers, saying, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Christ is the second Adam. He is the father of a new spiritual race. Among

all the relations under which Jesus is represented, as brother, friend, and husband, that of father, or the author of our spiritual life, is the most comprehensive and real. It includes in it all that is expressed by the other titles given to him. He is indeed "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Christ is the second Adam. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last man Adam was made a quickening spirit." Jesus is our spiritual father—the father of us all; as the Church is the mother of us all. The life which dwells in Christ's glorified body in heaven, transcends the limits of space, and is communicated to us through the means of grace in the Church.

There are many figures by which this life-relation is expressed, such as the head and members, the vine and its branches, &c., all of which show the reality of the mystical union, whilst its full nature is incomprehensible to our limited understandings. But the dearness of this union is the cause of the strongest attachment between the members of Christ's mystical body. They have the high and holy reason to love one another, that they are in common partakers of the divine nature—partakers of the life, the riches and gifts of Jesus Chaist. With the same love wherewith they love Jesus, they love one another; for "he that loveth him that begat, loveth them that are begotten of him." Dear Christian reader, as Jesus has loved you and given himself for you, you ought to love your brethren. "A new commandment," says Jesus, "I give unto you, That ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." You have here a very strong reason to love them, in the consideration of Christ's love and gifts, and in the motives which cluster around the common spiritual life of believers.

2. Another reason for loving your brethren, is found in the fact, that you expect to meet them in heaven; that you

expect to spend with them the life that never ends. The poet says,

> "there is a life above,
> Unmeasured by the flight of years;
> And all that life is love."

Life in heaven is a life of love; and if you have those immortal longings, which are the beginnings of heavenly joys on earth, you will love those who are, and will be partakers of your joys. Heaven is a holy and happy place, where the breath of woe never enters; and you expect to meet your brethren there. How then can you fail to have your heart drawn out toward them in strong affection? You naturally wish to meet your kindred and friends in that happy place. How much more should you love them, if you have the assurance, that you *shall* meet them there? If any of them die, having given undoubted evidences of piety, your love for them should be increased: and if you die, leaving them behind, you will wish them to follow you.

Often from your abode in the skies, you will look down upon your friends, so far as you may be permitted by infinite wisdom, to have a knowledge of their circumstances and state; and if it were in your power, you would say, in language like that of Moses to Hobab the son of Raguel, Moses' father-in-law: "We are journeying to the place, of which the Lord hath said, 'I will give it thee.' Come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." You will not be an uninterested spectator of your friends, as they journey in this world; and if you have any assurance, that they are coming to meet you, how will your heart bound with joy, and your affection for them be as that, which many waters cannot quench, nor the floods drown. But if they will not follow you, you will eventually forget them, and your love will be directed toward the brethren of that company, "who have come up through

much tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." As you esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, and "chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," so now all your delight will be in your brethren of the congregation, who are striving by divine grace, to meet you in the abode of the righteous.

While you are with them on the earth, you will love them, because they are journeying with you to the heavenly Canaan. You have left, in spirit, at least, houses and lands, father and mother, husband and wife, brother and sister for the kingdom of God's sake, and now your affections are placed on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. You have given evidence of your attachment to the people of God, by forsaking the course pursued by your unconverted friends; for the Saviour says: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." As before observed, you will eventually forget them, if they will not follow you. "The time is coming, when you will not be able to shed a tear over the lost, and you will not wish anything to be different from what it is." And why will this be so? Because your will, will be swallowed up in the will of God. Your affections will all be as are his affections, and you will not love his enemies, though they may have been your dearest friends.

It is well that you love your unbelieving kindred, so long at least, as they are in this probationary state. You have a deeper cause, however, to love your kindred in Christ; and especially those with whom you are associated in a congregational capacity, and with whom you are intimately acquainted. You are striving to get to the same heaven.

You expect to meet them there, where you shall enjoy the smiles of the same heavenly father, and of the same Jesus your elder brother. Though you may be indifferent to your brethren here, you cannot meet them there, without loving them; for heaven is a place of affection. The thought, that, in a few short months, or years at most, you will be together in the heavenly world, should subdue your heart into a sweet affection for your brethren in Christ. The thought, that, when a few more days shall have passed away, you shall stand by the grave of your intimate Christian friends —perhaps they may be your kindred according to the flesh —should constrain you to a sympathetic affection for them now. The thought, that, when a few brief moments of time shall have fled away forever, you shall spend a long eternity of bliss in heaven with your kindred in Christ, should constrain you now to regard them in the light of that eternal day, and now to love them with that love which shall then fill the souls of believers with the fulness of God. They have the same difficulties to pass through, in the journey of life, which you have. They have the same repentance to exercise, in striving to enter in at the "strait gate" and to pursue the "narrow way." They have the same sorrows, and the same joys. They have the same struggles of conscience with sin; the same conflicts of the mind; the same trials of faith; and the same troubles of the world; the same hopes and fears; the same deep longings for immortality; and when at last they arrive in heaven, it will be by the same grace, and the same Saviour who bought them a pardon. When at any time, you should be tempted to lift against any of your brethren, the foot of pride, think of these things.

There are times when roots of bitterness spring up among brethren, and they find it difficult to exercise that charity which is the bond of perfectness. Let them, however, remember their own imperfections and sins, and that it will

be with much difficulty they themselves shall get to heaven; for "the righteous shall scarcely be saved;" and it will at least assuage their animosity and dispose them to lenity. Let them remember, that, in a little while, they shall lie with each other side by side, in the same cemetery, and their souls shall return to God who gave them; and they will not find it in their hearts to hate that poor soul, which must soon appear before God, to give an account for the deeds done in the body.

Perhaps some of your brethren may do you injustice, and conduct themselves in such a way as to lead you to doubt whether they are true brethren; and you may then be tempted to think, that you are justified in disliking them, and that you ought not to have any communion with them, nor show them any kindness. But you should recollect, that as long as their conduct does not conflict with the Constitution of the Church, and as long as they are not guilty of any disciplinable offence, you are bound to exercise toward them that charity which "suffers long and is kind." You should love them for the relation they sustain to the visible Church, although you may doubt whether they are really of the Church, in the full sense of the term. The Lord may have some beneficial purpose to serve with them in the Church. The tares and the wheat must grow together until the time of the harvest. Above all, should you love them for the sake of their souls, which are still capable of being rescued through the means of grace in the Church.

If you have aught against any member of the Church, rather than treat him with indifference and unkindness, and speak evil of him behind his back; and thus embitter your own feelings against him, go and tell your mind to him alone, and entreat him to repent. Rather than conduct yourself toward him in a gruff and haughty manner, retire into your closet and pray for him. Pray also for yourself. Get a

view of your responsibilities, and when you consider how often you have injured the cause of Christ, both in secret and in public, and how feeble you are, without the aid of divine grace, you will be in a state of mind to speak to your erring brother in a proper manner and in a proper spirit. If this course be pursued, there are no difficulties between brethren which may not be removed, and no offending and offended ones who may not be reconciled; no wound which may not be healed; nor any grievance which may not be redressed. Most generally, those difficulties between church-members, which do not call for a process of trial before the Church, may be removed, by following the rule of our Saviour, recorded in Matth. 18 : 15, 16; and even very frequently, those which are of a more flagrant character, and would justify a legal procedure, may, according to this same rule of our Saviour, as expressed more in detail in the Constitution of the German Reformed Church, be entirely removed, and the parties reconciled; especially if, the offended and offending persons are disposed to peace, which they certainly ought to be, if they bear the name of Christians.

If, however, you have done all in your power to reconcile an offending brother, having admonished him twice or oftener, and in the presence of others; and if, after he has been reported to the church and brought to a trial, he is still incorrigible, it is then your duty to regard him "as an heathen man and a publican." Do not connive at his sins, "and have no company with him. Yet, count him not as an enemy; but admonish him as a brother." Let charity follow him as far as possible. He may yet be reclaimed, and his soul be saved in the great day of reckoning. You may yet meet him in heaven. You should, therefore, love him with a love of compassion, and feel towards him, as the Saviour felt towards his persecutors, when he said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets and stonest

them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, but ye would not."

Many a backslider would be reclaimed, were there more sons of consolation in the Church, who would sympathize with poor souls; and many an impenitent one might be converted from the error of his ways, and saved from death, were there more who loved the souls of men and took a deep interest in their salvation. It is true, however, that many are so unlovely and uninteresting in themselves, and render themselves still more so by their conduct, that you may be tempted to excuse yourself from taking any interest in them, or caring for their souls. Still, you should remember that they have souls, which are capable of experiencing the same joys, in some degree, with yourself. "A man's a man for a' that." Yea, they may be your superiors; for "God has chosen the poor of this world rich in faith." Jesus, in his holy mission, regarded the poor and lowly. He "became poor that we, through his poverty, might be made rich." He mingled with publicans and sinners, and preached the gospel to the poor. And one of his disciples, though a man of no mean standing, having been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, says: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," &c.

If, at any time, you should be inclined, from some cause or other, to think that you are justified in hating any of your fellow church-members, bear in mind that they have souls which may be redeemed, and that, though you cannot love them for their present virtues and character, you should love them for what they are capable of becoming. By the grace of God they may meet you in the upper sanctuary and wave

with you the palm of victory, and wear the crown of glory, and sing the song of the redeemed. If, at any time, you should have your feelings wounded, and be inclined to indulge a censorious spirit, and to use the tongue of slander, call to mind the words of Paul to Titus: "Put them in mind to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness to all men; for we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Here the motives, drawn from the powers of the world to come—the hope of eternal life—the hope of meeting in heaven with the Church triumphant—as well as those drawn from the example of our Saviour, are presented, in order to incline us to mercy and kindness.

I cannot refrain, in this place, from expressing an earnest wish, that the spirit of love may more generally and deeply pervade the members of the Church. O! that it might, at least, equal that of the primitive Christians, of whom it was said, "Behold! how these brethren love one another." We have the same glorious future to which to look forward, and though we may not, at present, be in danger of losing our lives, we have the same spiritual enemies to encounter which they had, and which may be the more dangerous, from the fact of their being more reserved and secret in their opposition; and instead of coming out openly against Christianity, mix truth with error in such a way as to destroy the former and give prevalence to the

latter. These errors in doctrine and practice will eventually bring the Church into a severe trial; for those who hold errors will probably become the bitter persecutors of the faithful. It is not at all improbable, that a common sense of danger may yet bind believers together in bonds of love more closely than ever. There is ground for such a probability, when we take into consideration the words of the inspired Apostle: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." Believers shall then betake themselves to each other, and devote themselves to prayer and to God. When these perilous times shall come, "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations, —the number of whom is as the sand of the sea—and they shall compass the camp of the saints about" for battle. They shall not succeed, however; for "a fire," or something equivalent to fire in its effects on material elements, "shall come down from God out of heaven, and devour them,"—shall thwart their plans and discomfit them. The redeemed shall have their names written in the book of life, and their enemies shall not prevail against them; for the Lord knoweth them that are his, and he will protect them, and they shall meet in the new Jerusalem, the holy city, come down from God out of heaven, having come off more than conquerers through him that loved them.

In view of these glories of the latter days, and the joyful meeting in heaven, and the trials and vicissitudes of the Christian journey, believers may well throw aside every mi-

nor consideration, and with ardent love, strive together for "the faith once delivered to the saints." While they are thus engaged in endeavoring to obtain a place in the new Jerusalem for themselves, and striving to win others to go with them to the mansions in heaven, they may well remember the words of Him who has gone to prepare a place for them, and who said, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." As they wish to meet their brethren in heaven, they should ever be influenced by the high and holy motives of "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will toward men."

Could St. John the evangelist—the apostle of love—once more revisit the earth, he would probably find occasion to speak even more of love, than he did before. There is an instance related of him by Jerome, in regard to the power of this one prevailing trait in his character, that may well be cherished in the memory of the Church. It is stated, that when he had become too old and feeble to walk to the church, his brethren, on one occasion, carried him thither, and when he arrived immediately in front of the pulpit, he strengthened himself to address the congregation, and said, "*Brethren, love one another.*" Dear reader, remember these words of the inspired apostle; for he spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost, in a peculiar manner. Listen to the voice of him who said, "Hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," and of him also who said, "Follow after charity;" and who, in bidding an affectionate adieu, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, concluded in these words: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

A PETITION FOR THE GRACE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT; AND AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE SAVIOUR'S COMMAND, TO LOVE HIM AND ONE ANOTHER.

Kind and merciful God, who "didst so love the world, that thou gavest thine only begotten Son, that whosoever should believe in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life," I would love thee with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength; for thou art worthy of the supreme homage and affection of my heart. And, O, thou kind and loving heavenly Father, may the love I bear to thee and thy cause, constrain me to love thy children also. I would yield myself to the influence of that love, which is heavenly and divine in its nature. I would sink into the arms of redeeming mercy, and feel that I am in the element of a new nature. I would yield myself to the control of the powers of the invisible world, and sweetly sink,—constrained by the dying love of my Redeemer—in submission to the will and way of God, the king eternal, immortal, invisible, and only wise.

But, O God! I acknowledge that I have withheld that affection which is due. I have not yielded to the power of that heavenly principle of love, which I have been commanded to exercise toward the brethren. I have not submitted myself to the will and way of him, who is love itself, and whose very essence is affection. And, O! it is with feelings of contrition, I acknowledge, that often, when I would do good, in this respect, evil is present with me; so easily am I influenced by supposed offences, and by the lusts that war in my members. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Feeling my insufficiency I betake myself to prayer.

Thou art a prayer-hearing, and a prayer-answering God, and thou hast said, through the mouth of Him who spake as never man spake, that thou art more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those that ask thee, than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. I am sensible, heavenly Father, that I need the Holy Spirit; for without his influence, love will be cold, and I will be at the mercy of every vile passion. I trust I sincerely desire his grace. Lord, behold my heart and see, and if I am not sufficiently convinced of my want, do thou teach me by thy word and

Spirit, and show me my sins. I am assured, that the way to grace is by penitence. Help me, therefore, to search my heart. And, O, what do I behold? The sin of indifference; the sin of carelessness; the sin of lukewarmness, for which thou hast threatened to cast me away—to spew me as it were, out of thy mouth; the sin of unbelief, for which thou hast threatened to cast me into the lake of fire. Yea, I behold my heart to be, as it were, the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. O Lord, have mercy on me, and grant me the cleansing power of thy good Spirit. Hear me, for the sake of Jesus, my Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHURCH AUTHORITY AND DISCIPLINE. CONDUCT OF THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN REFERENCE THERETO. PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF THE CONGREGATION.

"Let all things be done unto edifying." "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."

ALTHOUGH, as we have shown, charity is important, this does not imply, that church authority and discipline should be neglected. It does not imply, that such sins, as come under the denomination of disciplinable offences, should be connived at, or dealt with in any such way as to sanction them. The power of the keys is given to the Church, and she is bound to exercise it. It is her solemn duty to condemn, to some extent, by suspension and excommunication, errors in doctrine and practice.

It is the more necessary, that this subject should be considered at this time, because, at the present day, there is a disposition in men, both in the Church and the State, to abuse the principle of charity and mercy, by casting their mantle over crimes of the deepest die, without any regard to justice. There is a disposition to reject the authority of the Church in matters of discipline, which augurs no good for the future. In these circumstances, the Church should speak out in clear tones, and exercise the rod, as Paul calls it. She should exercise the power, which is given her of Christ, in Matth. 18 : 15–21, and John 20 : 23, where it is clearly indicated, that whatever the Church does on earth

according to the divine will, shall be done or sanctioned in heaven. And we may further say, that it is impossible for the Protestant part of the Church, as a whole, to do anything in the way of discipline to the destruction of souls, so long as she holds to the Scriptures as they were understood in the time of the apostles, and when the apostles' creed was formed, and in the time of the Reformation, when our catechisms and confessions of faith were drawn up and adopted. Even as the human mind heartily abhors tyranny in any shape or form, and particularly in the way of "lording it over God's heritage" in the Church; so should the pious mind likewise have a holy horror for that unbridled liberty which would sin with impunity, and claim the privilege of doing as it pleases. Latitudinarianism in doctrine or practice will work no good for the Church. To be strict in watching the moral conduct merely, of the church-member, without any reference to doctrine, is not sufficient.

In the primitive Church there was discipline for heresy, as well as for vice. Errors in theory will always lead to errors in practice. And as it is claimed as a kind of privilege at this day, that every upstart may know all that the Bible teaches, and consequently, if his notions do not agree with the views expressed in our Church symbols, he has the right to oppose the authority of the Church, and each man to follow his own course—I say, because this privilege is claimed, and because it is unscriptural, and the very soul of sectarianism, we ought to be the more ready to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Only let discipline and zeal for sound doctrine, be accompanied with charity. The one is not inconsistent with the other. Indeed, love to God and his cause, and love to the Church, and the souls of men, should lead to zeal in the application of discipline.

Some congregations are afraid to exercise discipline, lest

they should diminish in numbers and drive away their members to other congregations. But this will not be the effect, to any great extent, if there be an equal zeal manifested for their salvation. If there be a living state of piety in the Church, and if fervent prayer be offered, and efforts corresponding therewith, made for the salvation of souls, the key of discipline will not frighten them away. But should the exercise of discipline be attempted in a prayerless spirit, and when there is but little or no living religion in the Church, the undertaking will be hazardous enough.

From the want of a spirit of heaven-born charity, it becomes difficult to exercise discipline in the congregation; and from the want of this same spirit, also proceed the difficulties between church-members, as well as many of those between theologians, and between different denominations. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" Much contention arises from evil passions, and not from love of the truth. Often we are aroused to opposition against an individual or individuals, and we think we have good scriptural reasons for it, when, perhaps, the moving cause is, a supposed or real personal injury we have received. "Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall." It is well, in the exercise of discipline, and in noticing the faults of our brethren, that we examine our motives, lest, in condemning others, we fall into condemnation ourselves. It is required of a prosecuting witness or witnesses, that he or they be not actuated by unhallowed motives. Nothing but pure intentions and a desire to promote the welfare of the Church and the interests of religion, will be approved by the all-seeing eye of Jehovah. Whether the accused be guilty or not, if you prosecute him from unhallowed motives, you will not receive, nor be entitled to any thanks.

Care should be taken also, in accusing any one of an of-

fence, that the offence be one which fairly comes under the list of such as deserve censure, and therewith suspension or excommunication from the Church. There are subjects and practices, concerning which differences of opinion may be allowed. Charity should grant that liberty in minor and nonessential things, which the gospel permits. In general, it may be said, that all such things as operate against the purity and honor of the Church, and the interests of religion, are recognized as disciplinable offences. These are well summed up in the Constitution of the German Reformed Church, as follows, viz: "heresy, blasphemy, public schism, perjury, adultery, fornication, theft, fraud, lawless violence, contentiousness, intemperance, falsehood, filthy lucre, lascivious wantonness, gross profanation of the Lord's day, impudent scoffing, cruelty to servants, and others of similar character."

Another fact which should be borne in mind by every member of the Church, is, that, so long as an individual is not proved to be guilty of an offence, it is their duty to regard him as a member in full communion, and to feel toward him as one brother should toward another. They should not withdraw their confidence and sympathy, on the ground of a mere rumor, which, after all, may be untrue. A mere suspicion, sometimes, is sufficient to alienate the minds of brethren from each other, and this suspicion may grow finally into an open rupture, with all the uncourteous conduct and evil speaking, which usually attend such an occurrence. These things ought not so to be. The most terrible denunciations are pronounced against the slanderer. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain," is the language of inspiration. Never give publicity to a person's faults until you know that he is guilty; and then not until you have first spoken to him and

admonished him privately. Rather than "take up a reproach against your neighbor," and cherish hatred and ill will toward him, pray for him, and interest yourself in his behalf, in such a way as to benefit him.

Although church authority and discipline are important, as we have seen, it is still more important, that the church-member should conduct himself in such a manner as not to require the exercise of that authority and discipline upon him. Permit me, therefore, to address my counsels to you, who are a church-member, and especially, if you be a young church-member, forming your character for the future, whom it is my intention to follow through all the relations of life to its close, with my friendly advice and assistance, and then to bid you my last farewell, with the hope of meeting you, as a true pilgrim,

> "In the land of pure delight,
> Where saints immortal reign."

In order, that you may not fall into condemnation, it will be necessary for you to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit. I will select for your consideration those graces of the Spirit mentioned in the fifth chapter of Paul's epistle to the Galatians, where they are contrasted with the works of the flesh. It is presumed, that you have the Spirit of God; that you have an earnest religious mind, and a tender conscience, so that by yielding fully to the influence of religious truth, the fruit of the Spirit will appear. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such," says the apostle, "there is no law," that is, no law shall condemn them; they shall be approved before God.

1. *Love.* We have already spoken of this grace. We cannot, however, speak of it too much, in the way of urging its exercise and cultivation. It is here placed first on the

list, thereby indicating its importance. Love! what is it? Shall we define it? It must live in your soul, if you would understand it. Go to the child who has a loving parent—a Christian parent—a parent who prays with and for him in such a manner as to leave no doubt in his mind but that he loves him; and you will see in his eye—in his countenance—in his whole demeanor, a living definition of love. Go to the disciple, who once betrayed his master, and behold his tears of penitence; hear him say, in answer to the testing question: "Lovest thou me?" "Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," and you have a good illustration of the nature and power of love.

Love is the very life of true religion. It is the revivifying oil, which sends light and heat through every part of your conduct, and should pervade every thought, word and deed. Cultivate this love to God and the souls of men, by the influence of which you will be enabled to do good unto all men, and especially to the household of faith. If you will follow the promptings of this love, you will give no offence either to Jew or Gentile, or to the Church of God. On the other hand, the most fearful denunciations are pronounced against you, if you are destitute of this love. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha;" that is, let him be accursed, or condemned, at the coming of our Lord. Let him be cast out, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. Where the Lord is in his glory, he cannot be. From heaven he shall forever be shut out.

2. *Joy.* The Spirit produces joy. The Holy Spirit prepares the way for the indwelling of the Spirit and life of Jesus Christ, and Christ leads the soul to the Father, declaring him, and opening a communion with him, the fountain of eternal bliss; and the fact of the Holy Trinity thus making their abode with the believer and declaring his sins

forgiven, is a source of joy. The joys of pardoned sin, and the foretaste of the joys of heaven, which the pardon of sin affords, will enable you to overcome the discouragements which would otherwise greatly depress your spirit. You need encouragement, such as the world cannot give, nor take away. The mind is often ready to despair. In your efforts to please your God and to advance his cause in the world, you may be cast down. At such times you may refresh your spirit, by communing with the upper world. The glories of eternity will then come to meet you, and you can look forward at the prospect before you, and the hope, that you will soon enter these eternal glories, will animate you in the ways of well-doing. Very properly did the apostle encourage the Philippian Christians in the language of hope and trust, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known to all men. The Lord is at hand." Yes, the Lord is at hand. He is here, and he is in heaven, and he will come and take you to himself. Rejoice, therefore.

3. *Peace.* The soul which has anchored its hopes on Jesus, amid the storm of divine wrath which has awakened its fears, obtains peace. A calm and settled state of mind takes the place of those doubts, and fears, and dreadful forebodings, which before harassed the soul. A sweet consciousness and satisfaction, that all is well, succeeds the "dark waters and thick clouds of the skies." If you have ever passed through spiritual conflicts of this kind, you have experienced a heavenly peace as the result. The precise time, during these struggles, when you obtained assurance of favor, may not be so clear to your mind, and even after you have passed through the whirlpool which threatened to make shipwreck of your soul, you can scarcely believe yourself safe. But you have passed through and escaped being engulphed in the whirlpools of doubt, despair, and unbelief.

The precise place where your greatest danger lay, you may not have perceived; but this you know, that you have passed through dangers seen and unseen. You may still doubt; but the Spirit bears witness with your spirit, that you are born of God, and it is your privilege to take the comfort of that assurance, and be at peace with God. You have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before you, which hope you have as anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. The Spirit's rising beam points you to the "*star of Bethlehem.*"

> "This is your guide, your light, your all,
> It bids your dark forebodings cease;
> And through the storm and danger's thrall,
> It leads you to the port of peace."

The effect of this peace upon your conduct will be, to make you peaceful toward your fellow men. You will manifest a peaceful spirit. Being at peace with God, and with your own conscience, you will be at peace with others. You will be at peace with the Church. You will be a peacemaker; and, as much as in you lies, you will live peaceably with all men. Much more might be said of this grace, of which the Saviour said, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." We will, however, only add the English poet's address to peace:

> "Lovely, lasting peace of mind,
> Sweet delight of human kind;
> Heavenly born and bred on high,
> To crown the fav'rites of the sky.
> With more of happiness below,
> Than victors in a triumph know;
> Whither, O whither art thou fled,
> To lay thy meek contented head?
> What happy region dost thou please
> To make the seat of calm and ease?
> O lovely, lasting peace appear!

This world itself, if thou art here,
Is once again with Eden blest,
And man contains it in his breast.
'Twas thus, as in the grove I stood,
And sung my wishes to the wood,
And lost in thought no more perceived
The branches whisper as they waved.
It seemed, as all the quiet place
Confessed the presence of the grace,
When thus she spake: Go rule thy will,
Bid thy wild passions all be still;
Know God, and bring thy heart to know
The joys that from religion flow.
Then every grace will be its guest,
And I'll be there to crown the rest."

4. *Long-suffering.* This Christian grace implies "patience to defer anger, and contentedness to bear injuries." Happy indeed will you be, if you will not have occasion to call this grace into exercise; but this is hardly to be expected, in a world where sin has blighted the fair fruits of holiness, as it has in ours. You will have occasion to restrain your irritated feelings, and to treat those who have injured you, with the spirit of forbearance. Were you to give vent to a discontented mind, and indulge in a spirit of revenge, you would soon deserve the censure of the Church for contentiousness. You should bear with the frailties and provocations of others, from the consideration, that God has long borne with yours. "The long-suffering of God is salvation," and the sweet persuasion, that he has been merciful to you, should induce you to practice forbearance toward your erring fellow-men.

Charity suffers long and is kind; and the spirit which would lead you to resent every injury, with a punctilious regard to "points of honor," is not of God. That proud and haughty spirit, which cannot brook an insult without resorting to retaliation, is not the spirit of the Christian. Consider the Saviour as your example. He was insulted

and injured: but he opened not his mouth. He suffered long, and was kind. He could afford not to notice the insults and injuries, which were heaped upon him. He saw, and yet he did not see. "Who is blind but my servant? or deaf as my messenger that I sent? Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?" Jesus is a perfect exemplar—a perfect gentleman—a perfect character, and upon him were bestowed distinguished honors. "The Lord is well pleased for his (Christ's) righteousness sake. He will magnify the law and make it honorable." The law, and every correct principle, are honored in Christ.

5. *Gentleness.* This is such a sweetness of temper, as disposes those who possess it, to be affable and courteous in their conduct, and easy to be entreated by any who have wronged them. This grace will cause you to be respected and beloved. Many, who possess other Christian virtues, are deficient in this. Though they wish to give no offence, they destroy much of their influence, by their harsh temper and overbearing conduct. Their bad temper is made worse by their harsh words; and these both conspire together to lead them to sin against their brother, or to cast him off with indignation, if he happen to commit the least sin, or come short, in some respect, of their idea of propriety.

When you have long borne with an erring brother, do not at last spoil all your *long-suffering*, by breaking out into a violent passion. Let your gentleness last to the end; and if you must reprove, let it be done in love. Christ, your Saviour, pronounced a woe upon the "scribes and pharisees, and hypocrites;" but he did it in love, as well as in anger. His indignation was coupled with gentleness, and at the last he prayed for them, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." He was ready to forgive, and easy to be entreated, by all who had wronged him.

6. *Goodness.* A generosity of spirit characterizes a

branch of the true vine. He that is under the teaching of the Spirit, has a disinterested kindness and benevolence of disposition, which makes him ready to do good as he has opportunity. He desires to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of his fellow-creatures, according to the best of his ability, and according to the plan that appears to be the most feasible. He is not swayed by self-interest, and does not do good, merely that he may be repaid again in this world. His only ruling desire is, to promote the highest good of his fellow-creatures, and the glory of the creator of all. He does not do good to others, in order that they may pay him back with interest. He does not indulge a generous spirit toward them, only as long as they help him to make money. No. A disinterested goodness which "asks not again," prompts him to deeds of benevolence to all men, and especially to the household of faith.

7. *Faith.* This word is taken in the sense of "fidelity, justice, and honesty, in what we profess and promise to others." You have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you have promised your pastor and the Church, that you would obey the requisitions of the Bible, as they are expressed in the Catechism and Constitution of our Church. If you have the Spirit of God, you will conscientiously endeavor to fulfill these promises. And if you neglect and break your engagements with God and his Church, you will expect to be corrected and chastened of the Lord, and admonished by the Church. You will not make any reservations, and, while you profess to serve God with the whole heart, and to give him your all, like Ananias and Sapphira, keep a portion to be used according to your own self-will. If you have the grace of honest fidelity, you will have respect to all the commands of God. You will consider as obligatory, all the duties of a church-member.

So likewise in your transactions with individuals, culti-

vate a strict fidelity to all your promises. A carelessness in this respect, will bring upon you the displeasure of your friends. Step by step you will advance in the way of the unfaithful servant, until you bring upon yourself serious consequences. A want of punctuality, will impair confidence, in whomsoever it is found. Cultivate a conscientious regard to all your promises, and be perfect in all your engagements, so far as you are capable of being perfect, as your Father, who is in heaven, is perfect. He is faithful who has promised ; he also will perform.

8. *Meekness.* This is very much the same as gentleness. It is more the effect of the will, however, and is, especially the grace by which the passions and resentments are restrained and controlled, and by which we are easily pacified, when we have been offended. It is the very opposite of anger and a spirit of revenge.

Meekness should be a marked trait in your character. You should check the first rising of resentment in your breast. Let not this sin have dominion over you ; and if perchance, you should be led astray so far as to permit the wrath of man to take possession of your mind, let not the sun go down on your anger. If at any time, you have indulged in any thing which has given just cause of offence to any one, seek a reconciliation as soon as possible. Remember the words of Christ : "If thou bring thy gift before the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee ; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift." Alas ! that any one, professing to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, should harbor ill-feelings for days, and weeks, and months, and even years, toward a fellow disciple. Ah ! that is certainly not the spirit of Christ. It is not the spirit of the apostles ; for one beseeches the Corinthians "by the meekness and gen-

tleness of Christ;" and another says, "Beloved, let us love one another. If any man say, 'I love God,' and hateth his brother, he is a liar;" and all bear witness that the wisdom which is from above, is peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits. As God has been merciful toward you, so should you be merciful toward your brother.

> "All the souls that are, were forfeit once,
> And he who might the 'vantage best have took,
> Found out the remedy. How would you be,
> If HE. who is the top of judgment, should
> But judge you as you are? Oh! think on that,
> And mercy will breathe within thy lips,
> Like man *new made.*
> Tho' *justice* be thy plea. consider this,
> That in the course of justice, none of us
> Should see *salvation;* we do pray for mercy;
> And that same prayer, doth teach us all to render
> The deeds of mercy."

9. *Temperance.* Moderation in food and drink and other enjoyments of life, may be included in the word temperance. It seems to be mentioned last, because it has more exclusive regard to man's own person. It has more immediate reference to an individual's self, than the other fruits of the Spirit. It refers to his body,—this house—this tenement of clay, in which he lives, and which, nevertheless, is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Plunging into sensual enjoyments, of some kind or other, to excess, destroys the body and enervates the mind, and excludes the Holy Spirit; for the Spirit cannot dwell, where men make a god of their bodily appetites, that is, give themselves up to inordinate affection for sensual gratification, and thus worship the creature more than the Creator.

To be deficient in the grace of temperance is to suffer in every other respect; for intemperance obscures and destroys all other graces. It is in view of this fact, that the sacred

writer exhorts, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." Paul also says to Timothy, "Flee also youthful lusts," intimating that this is necessary, in order to "be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

I need not tell you, that the chief danger of intemperance is from indulging in the use of intoxicating drinks. This is incomparably the most destructive of all forms of intemperance. It inflames every vile passion, and every sensual appetite. It strengthens every "foolish and hurtful lust, which drown men in destruction and perdition." You should avoid it, as you would avoid the judgment and perdition of ungodly men; as you would avoid hell itself.

Without presuming to define precisely to what extent you may indulge with safety in the use of intoxicating drinks, I would give my advice as one who has received mercy of the Lord, to be faithful. The intoxicating drinks in use, at the present day, are much more deleterious in their effects than those used in former times. The probability is, that they are injurious, if used in any quantity as a beverage, or a common drink. If so, a conscientious regard to your health, in view of the sixth command, should induce you to abstain from the use of them. It has always appeared to me, a very foolish custom, to say the least, for a person in health to use spirituous liquors, as a beverage, even should they not be injurious to health. At all events, the high and magnanimous motives of the gospel, should lead you to keep yourself as far from the dangers of intemperance as possible; and instead of venturing to indulge even moderately in the use of intoxicating liquors—for which there is no necessity, except for medicinal purposes, as a physician may prescribe in the case of an invalid—you should shun the use of them entirely. All are aware of the dangers and tempta-

tions to which a person is exposed, who uselessly drinks a dram occasionally. You pray, "Lord, lead me not into temptation," and yet by drinking you would place yourself in the way of temptation. To be consistent, you should avoid the temptations of "the cup," as a deadly evil.

Moreover, you are under solemn obligations, more and more to flee from that which is evil, and to cleave to that which is good. You are under solemn obligations to do your duty, as far, and as soon, as you become acquainted with it. And this you will do, if you are a true believer. You will "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God." To illustrate, at once, your duty and your disposition, permit me to relate an anecdote, which occurred in substance as follows:—A gentleman wished to hire a coachman. Three young men came to him to offer their services. The first, to recommend himself, remarked, that he could drive within an inch of the edge of a precipice without going over. The second observed, that he could approach within six inches without driving over. The third said he could stay away as far as possible. I'll employ you, sir, said the gentleman; I'll employ you, sir. Just so, he that is wise and conscientious, will avoid, as much as possible, the precipice of intoxication, which stands on the side of the abyss of intemperance, into which thousands have been hurled by venturing too near.

Drunkenness is classed as a disciplinable offence; and, in the absence of a definition of what constitutes drunkenness, I will venture to say, that to drink so much that the effect, to any extent, of an injurious character, may be seen by your friends and acquaintances, constitutes drunkenness. A drunkard shall not inherit eternal life, any more than an idolater, or fornicator, or thief, or covetous one, or reviler, or extortioner shall, unless he repent and reform through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. No one shall enter the

kingdom of heaven, who is not willing to "break off his sins by righteousness;" and he, who is unwilling to forsake the sin of drunkenness, is unwilling to forsake any other sin he may love. He thereby shows, that he is destitute of the Holy Spirit, and of the life of Jesus Christ the true vine.

The Spirit of God, operating on the heart, prompts an individual to live temperately, soberly, and godly in this present evil world. Drunkenness should be avoided the more strenuously, because it is the parent of many other sins. It will lead to profane swearing, to quarreling and fighting; to theft, to covetousness, and to sensual abuses of every kind. In a community where drunkenness prevails, there is little or no virtue, or religion. Let temperance prevail, and men will reflect, and repent of their sins against God, and reform to the salvation of their souls, if they are in possession of the institutions of religion.

Though you may easily be so far temperate, as to avoid the notice of your friends, and the censure of the Church, you will not be satisfied without avoiding the causes, and the steps which lead to it, and which may exist long before any effect is visible. The fruit which appears on a tree, or on the stalk, is the result of a process which goes on beneath the ground, and is unseen. So intemperance, together with all other vices, are the result of sinful thoughts and worldly lusts, and evil principles, which operate in the heart unseen. These, however, are known to Jehovah. He looks upon the heart. The Church pronounces censure and condemnation only as she has evidence by the fruit. "By their fruits, ye thall know them." But God will condemn, though the fruit may be suppressed and concealed by hypocrisy; for while the heart is still unrenewed and adapted to produce only evil fruit,—though that fruit may not be brought to perfection—it is not right with God. As a gen-

eral thing, however, the heart will develop itself, and a Christian may be known by his fruits.

And now, dear reader, I have endeavored to direct your attention to some of the Christian graces. Suffer me to exhort you to cultivate these fruits of the Spirit. By doing so, you will avoid falling into condemnation ; and you will receive the honor of God and the approbation of the Church. But if you should happen to fall into open sin, confess your fault, and, like Peter of old, repent of your sin in earnest and deep self-abasement. And, if you are charged, as you may suppose, wrongfully, do not refuse to attend a trial before the consistory of the congregation, and thus have the charge investigated. I have known persons who would not do this, because they considered that they were falsely accused, and because the officers of the Church were much younger than themselves, and because they had lived in the Church so many years without being called to account for anything which they had done. But beware how you treat the church council. They are the constituted authority under God, for the execution of his will in the government of the Church. He that despises the Church, despises Christ, and he that despises Christ, despises him that sent him.

The disgrace of denying sin and concealing it, after it has been committed, is far greater than the disgrace of discovery and acknowledgment. It is more honorable in the sight of God, and of all honest men, to acknowledge a fault, than to conceal it, and to submit to a trial under the proper authority, than to refuse any investigation. " He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Remember Achan, who hid the Babylonish garment, the wedge of gold, and the three hundred shekels of silver in the midst of his tent, as the Israelites were journeying to the land of Caanan, and

brought upon himself and his family swift destruction. Had he confessed, he would have saved himself; but he did not until the fiat went forth that the troubler of Israel should be destroyed. Then he confessed, but it was too late. Thus God will destroy the wicked in the day of judgment, when they shall confess, and it shall be too late.

But I trust it will not come to this with you. If you are truly faithful and peaceable, you will give the Church no trouble, and save yourself the mortification of a long trial and condemnation at last. You will confess the truth at once, fully and frankly, without trying to raise new issues. There are those who try to evade the truth, by raising collateral, and new questions. This is dishonorable and unchristian, and I hope you will never give your brethren any trouble in this respect. An honest-minded person can generally make a question of discipline, with regard to himself, very plain, by stating his own deficiencies or offences, and asking pardon of God and of the Church: and he can make short work of an act of discipline, by submitting to admonition and attending to his own guilt without finding fault with others, and with the manner in which his case has been brought up and disposed of. If all were thus minded, a happy day would dawn upon the Church, beyond any that has yet appeared.

Another motive which I would place before your mind, to stimulate you in the work of faith and labor of love, is, the promotion of the prosperity of the congregation. Not only should you avoid the censure of the Church, and preserve your own character, but you should also promote the welfare of the Church. Your plans and schemes in the congregation should all have for their object the advancement of its prosperity; and all your plans of worldly good, as well as your schemes for acquiring wealth, and promoting the welfare of your family, should centre in and be subor-

dinate to the object of promoting the welfare of the Church. All your plans and desires should be controled and directed by the principle expressed in the petition of the Lord's prayer: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." I am confident, that I do not place the mark too high, when I say, that the object of your life should be nothing less than to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

1. Some persons seem to be satisfied to have just religion enough to keep them out of perdition, and to avoid the censure of the Church. Without denying that such may get to heaven, I am bound to think that their case is doubtful, and that they occupy dangerous ground. They appear to me to be too much of the character of Ananias and Saphira, and I am far from proposing such a position to you. No, I would rather propose to you the position of the apostle Paul, who said, "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before; I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;" and that of the apostle Peter, who said, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, viz: add to faith virtue and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge temperance, &c., ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

I would woo you into affection for the Church, and stimulate you to active efforts to promote her welfare, by the glorious future which is before you, and by the glorious future which is in reserve for the Church in her triumphs in this world. It is wrong for a church-member to have any object in higher estimation in the world, than this. The cause of God should lie the nearest his heart of all that engages his attention here.

It is an evil and a bitter thing, when the interests of the Church are held in subordination to other interests. Some appear to make their worldly and family interests the greatest object of their lives, and when these are not promoted by the Church, they are willing to forsake her. They wish to use the Church as a means to make money, or to advance them in their "business" and promote their worldly, selfish ends. They thus make merchandise of the Church, and trifle with holy things, which God has set apart for another use. This is awfully wicked conduct, and when characters of this kind get into the Church, they never fail to be troublesome.

The Church indeed does promote our best worldly interests by indirect and spiritual means, but not by making herself a machine or a medium by the direct means of which our stock of wealth is increased, and our families are placed in the best of circumstances. Very often our Christian profession may be the means of bringing poverty upon us, by withdrawing from us the patronage of the worldly minded; but, in the end, and on the whole, even earthly prosperity will come to us, sufficient at least to make us comfortable. For virtue will prosper, and the righteous shall not be forsaken; nor shall his seed beg bread, or be in absolute want. Numerous instances have occurred, in the history of the world, in proof of this. But if piety do not always bring wealth, it will bestow a mind which can appreciate and enjoy what God, in his providence, may grant. "The meek shall inherit the earth:" that is, they shall enjoy the earth with its blessings.

But this should not be the object after which you should strive. You should be willing to serve God, whether he grants you little or much of this world's goods. You should endeavor to promote the good of the Church, whether she promotes your temporal welfare or not. Her primary de-

sign is to promote your spiritual, and not your temporal prosperity. In doing the former, she may, or may not do the latter, and still accomplish her design.

2. Others, again, appear to desire above all things else, to promote their own importance and popularity. They love to have the præeminence. The curse of an ambitious mind seems to follow them into their very devotions, and in the place where they should be characterized by humility of mind, they seek the honor which comes from men. They wish themselves and their families and friends to stand in the first place, and to be at the head of everything that is done or doing in the congregation. Are officers to be elected and they are not chosen, they are offended. Are prayer-meetings held and they are not called upon to lead, they are dissatisfied, and will withdraw their prayers and sympathies from the Church, and rather exert their influence to retard, than to advance her interests. Is a church edifice to be built, or a minister called, or a parsonage to be erected, or any enterprise to be commenced and carried forward, and they are not largely consulted and sufficient deference is not paid to their opinions and wishes, they will oppose the measure.

It is to be hoped you will avoid this disposition of mind, and that you will cordially coöperate with every laudible effort for the good of the Church; and especially, that you will not cease to labor for the best interests of the Church, even though you may not be as favoraby regarded, and as highly esteemed, as you think you should be. May the prayer of the Psalmist be ever upon your lips: "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity." With Isaiah, may you be ready to do the will of God, and say, "Here am I, send me;" send me to do thy work. May I be willing to do anything, to go anywhere, and to be anything for thy sake and the Church's

sake. Why should you seek high station, and love to have the preeminence? Do your duty faithfully, and you shall attain to that standing which God, by his providence, may indicate for you; and that consideration of which your brethren may esteem you worthy. "Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, and he will exalt you in due time." This world is not the place to look for honors. You should seek the honor which comes from God only, and that honor which he bestows at the last day, upon those who shall have been his good and faithful servants.

3. There are still others who are naturally or constitutionally tyrannical and overbearing in their dispositions. By constitution and by education a man may come to look upon others as subject to him, to regard his own decisions and opinions as always right, and to consider that others ought to submit their will and wishes to his direction and control. Instead of guiding the minds of others by earnest reason and persuasion, he will brow-beat and bully them into his own views and measures. It is to be feared, there are many who have been educated in a separatistic way—in a way by which they have been led to think their decisions are infallibly right—who are accordingly extremely intolerant and overbearing. And were it not for the voice of history, which in this respect is still regarded, and for public opinion, they would probably act over again the scenes of intolerance witnessed in former days, during the existence of Roman inquisitions. I say, it is to be feared there are many of this spirit. But, wherever it is found, it is not the spirit of the gospel. In things essential, let history and the word of God decide. In things doubtful or indifferent, let reason, propriety and Scripture principles direct, and not self-interest and self-will. I trust I speak the mind of the Spirit and the voice of the Church, when I say: Let those who are in authority in the Church, govern

according to the will of God. Let them not lord it over God's heritage, but be helpers together of his people's joy. Let those who counsel and advise, speak the language of correct reason, and not that of dictation and self-will.

I hope, if you are tainted with any of this unhappy temper of mind, you will, as a conscientious member of the Church, endeavor to rid yourself of it, and submit to the dictates of reason and truth, and regard your brethren,—as to their rights and opinions and wishes—more on an equality with yourself. They may be inferior to you in mind and knowledge ; but they still have a right to be treated as reasonable creatures. They should be led, not driven, by you as a guide. If they are driven at all, let them be driven by the command and will of God. But in matters in which God has not delegated you to execute his will, you are not authorized to dictate, but to persuade and reason. "Mind not high things," therefore, "but condescend to men of low estate," and consider that they have a conscience, reason, and a will as well as yourself. "Be of the same mind one toward another," says Paul ; that is, live in harmony and concord by considering each other's rights and opinions. And again, "Be not wise in your own conceits."

4. Closely allied with those who are self-willed and unreasonable, is another class of persons who conscientiously think, that their plans and measures must be carried out, or there will be no prosperity. They are so wedded to their own opinions and plans, that if these do not succeed, they are ready to give up all efforts in despair. Instead of relying mainly on the regular ordained means of grace for the progress of the kingdom of God, they have always some extraordinary scheme of their own, which appears to them more important than anything else. Apparently every thing must stop, rather than that their favorite schemes should be hindered. They will tie down the car of progress,

in religious affairs, to *their* notions of expediency. They are not willing to allow that their plans should be set aside by the wisdom of others, and that God, in his providence, can use other means to advance his cause. It sometimes happens, though they are so strongly attached to their designs, that their plans are very poorly adapted to accomplish a good end. But whether good or bad, the failure of accomplishment through the opposition of others, or the existence of unfavorable circumstances, should not deter any one from doing that which is in his power for the good of Zion. Variety in religious meetings, adapted to times and circumstances, and improvements in the accommodations of places of worship, and in all the ways of bringing about a practical application of the spirit and principle of our holy religion to the minds of men, may be well, and should be studied. There is such a thing as adaptation—a becoming all things to all men, that we may, by all means gain some. If, however, one effort fail, we should make another. If one plan does not succeed, we should try another. If you, therefore, should have a plan to promote the welfare of your congregation, and it does not succeed, be not so discouraged as to yield to despair. If you have reason to believe your scheme is a good one, endeavor in mildness and firmness to carry it out ; but if your brethren think otherwise, then do what you can by other means. Let the welfare of the congregation be ever your uppermost desire, and may the words of the Psalmist inspire you with love to Zion: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after ; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

5. Another mode of promoting the welfare of the congregation is the practical carrying out of the spirit and doctrines of that branch of the Church to which you belong.

Every distinct branch of the Church has its peculiar spirit. It may be impossible to describe this spirit fully, or to explain entirely wherein it consists; but still it exists and may be felt. Thus when members of one denomination attend the preaching and worship of another denomination, they may be edified and benefitted to some extent; but they do not feel fully at home, because it is not their own Church. Their spiritual wants are not so fully met and satisfied, because that peculiar spirit is not present, to which they have been accustomed.

It is true, at the same time, that peculiarities, which are not essential and important, should give way before the essential objects and truths of our holy religion. These objects are the divine life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, communicated and accompanied with the agency and indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the presence of the Father, thus bringing the soul into a real and living communion with the triune God. And with these objects are connected certain facts or truths, and a certain theory of religion and system of doctrines, which are necessary to be believed and held fast to, in order that the divine life of Christ in the Church may be obtained and fully developed, or carried out. This mediatorial life and communion with God, the infinite and holy One, is realized by the means of grace in the Church. And these objects of faith are expressed and included in such words of the New Testament Scriptures as the following: "The faith once delivered to the saints;" "The doctrine according to godliness;" "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory;" "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in

the flesh, is not of God." "For the life was manifested;" "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life;" "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world;" "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

These objects of faith, together with the doctrines and theory of religion with which they are connected, are also expressed and comprehended in the "articles of our undoubted Christian faith," or the Apostles' Creed, as it has been called. It was so called, because it contains the truths which the Apostles held up and preached, as the essential truths of salvation. It expresses the doctrines and spirit of the apostles. It includes those things which were taught by the apostles as the necessary beginnings of all true faith and the germs of all true doctrine in time to come. The same are expressed, in other words, in the Epistles and other writings of the apostles; but here they are brought together. These articles contain the system of doctrine commonly received in the time of the apostles and for some time thereafter; but were never written down in full in their present form, until heresies arose in the Church, and the Church in the exercise of her right and duty pronounced censure upon these heresies. As such—taken in their original spirit and meaning—they form a standard by which we may judge of doctrines in all time to come; for whatever differs materially from those cannot be of apostolic origin, or in accordance with the Scriptures and the teachings of the apostles.

The individual who undertakes to interpret the Scriptures

without acknowledging, consulting, and understanding these articles of the primitive Christians and Apostles, will lose the spirit and true meaning of the Scriptures themselves. He who will not study the Scriptures, in connection with the manner in which the Church has studied and understood them in the different periods of history, will run into the wildest errors, and delusions, and schisms. This has been proved by the history of the past. The use of the Apostles' Creed appears in this, that it is a guide to prevent heresies, and to enable us to keep a proper knowledge of the Scriptures. Not that it is inspired like the Scriptures, and perfectly infallible; but because it is a general outline of the fundamental truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as they were felt and realized in the beginning. Although peculiarities and even important differences ought to give way before these essential facts and doctrines, yet in the present state of things, they do not do it. Though divisions should be prevented by them, yet, as the Christian world now stands, they are not. And though divisions should have been prevented by them from the beginning, they were not, owing to the imperfection and sinfulness of human nature. The work of redemption was committed to the agency of men. The Holy Spirit was poured out and the life and Spirit of Christ were applied to the life of humanity in the persons of the members of the Church who were but erring men; and, consequently, in its development, heresies had to arise, that they who are approved, may be made manifest.

Numerous sects arose in the first ages of the Church. More than fifty are enumerated by one writer. These have all gone out of existence. And thus it is, that time will show, in the end, what is genuine truth. Historical development will prove every man's work. "By their fruits shall ye know them." By tracing the development of doc-

trines and practices from the beginning, in connection with the infallible and inspired Scriptures, we can judge of them whether they are good or evil. Thus they will be judged and esteemed, and sects which are in error, and consequently have no right to exist, will come to an end, or at most have a feeble and unimportant existence, and finally run out into open infidelity; whilst those who have a mission to fulfill will continue until their claims are acknowledged, and justice is done to their principles and Spirit by those from whom they differ, and they be again united in cordial union and coöperation in the work of the Lord.

But, not only did sects arise in the beginning; the body of the Church also became extremely corrupt, so much so, that it was almost universally felt in the fifteenth century, that a reformation was necessary. Those, who were in authority in the Church, instead of governing according to the revealed will of God, lorded it over God's heritage. Antichrist took his seat in the very centre of the temple of God, and usurped the authority. Burdens were placed on men, which it was not their duty to bear; and the consequence was a division and a protest against errors and abuses. The cause of this division was in those, who were in authority, and with them the responsibility lies. Those who separated from the Church of Rome in the days of the Reformation, were justified in the steps they took. True, not all sects which have arisen since, had a just cause for separating themselves from the Church; the Reformation of the sixteenth century, however, will stand acknowledged as eminently a work of God. But such are the diverse influences upon the human mind, and such the weakness of human nature, that Protestants also divided. This division in Germany was caused by the unreasonableness and obstinacy of Luther. It arose out of his opposition to Carlstadt and the fanatics, who wished to deny the doctrine of the real pres-

ence in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and the latter of whom even went so far, in their opposition to forms, as to deny the use of the written word, thus falling into the error of what may be called spiritual formalism, and forgetting that the true and full influences of the Spirit of God are confined to the divinely ordained forms and means of grace in the Church. Luther, fearing the extremes of these persons, and contending for what he knew to be important, fell somehow into the mistake of maintaining the idea of a bodily presence in the sacrament, and making a belief in this doctrine essential to union. Until this controversy took place, Protestants began to be designated by the name Reformed, and would probably have continued to be so designated, had not the division occurred. Those who rejected the doctrine of the bodily presence, generally retained this name. In Germany and Switzerland, those who opposed the Lutheran view of the sacrament, were at first headed by Zwingli and Oecolampadius; afterwards by Calvin, Ursinus and Olevianus. Melancthon also favored their views. Ursinus and Olevianus particularly gave expression to the true views of the Reformed Church in Germany, by preparing that excellent formula of doctrine, the Heidelber Catechism.

My object in this digression, sketching the history of doctrine and the Church, is to show the origin of the German Reformed Church, to have been justifiable and honorable, and that, in laboring to promote her welfare, you are doing God service. For a more full history of the Reformation and of the German Reformed Church, I would refer you to D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, Dr. Mayer's History of the German Reformed Church, and Dr. Nevin's History and Genius of the Heidelberg Catechism.

If you are a member of the German Reformed Church, it is presumed that you have imbibed her spirit. She has

no doubt a mission to fulfill—a work to perform for the benefit of souls and for the good of our common Christianity. Her origin is honorable and her history full of interest, "enshrining ideas and principles which are worthy of being cherished as a precious legacy in all coming time." It is presumed, therefore, that you are willing to say: "I am, as to my Church relations, German Reformed, and never expect to be anything else, unless I should live to see the day when the way will be prepared for a reunion with those from whom the German Reformed originally differed. But until then, I shall be German Reformed and nothing else; and in heaven where all God's people are fully and visibly one, and under one visible head, I expect to glory in what God has wrought through and by means of the German Reformed Church." There is nothing inconsistent or uncharitable in a view of this kind. It is only maintaining ones "own things," without disparagement to "the things of others."

The spirit or genius of a Church is enshrined in her doctrines, discipline, customs and usuages, and in her history. Sometimes it manifests itself preeminently in one direction and sometimes in another. Thus the spirit of the German Reformed Church has at one time preeminently manifested itself in protesting against some particular errors, and at another time, in pleading for charity, concession and union. Her most distinguishing trait, however, is a conservative spirit. As a member of the Church, you should, therefore, conscientiously adhere to her doctrines, discipline, customs and usages. By doing so, you can eminently promote the glory of God. And by advancing the interests of your congregation, you will promote your own spiritual welfare. By making full proof of the means of sanctification, which your own Church affords, you may promote your own personal advance in holiness as well and as fully as elsewhere.

By attending faithfully to secret prayer, family worship, public worship, together with the meetings of the congregation for consultation, edification and prayer, and especially to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, your own spiritual wants will be abundantly supplied. But you should not forget, that by neglecting to carry out the doctrines and observing the customs and usages of your Church, you open the floodgates of error, and stir up discord and dissension. The union, peace and harmony of the Church as a whole, and also of every congregation, depend upon preserving inviolate her distinctive character, as that is comprehended in her doctrines, customs and usages. If you do not sympathize with the Church to which you belong, you are inconsistent and unnatural in your position. In her, God, by his providence and grace, has called you to live and labor. Why then should you not sympathize with her? Why should you not go forward cordially and promote her denominational interests? There can be no valid objection to this mode of doing good; nor can there be any excuse for lukewarmness in this respect.

6. An evil to be avoided in your intercourse with your brethren, and with all others, is a spirit of censoriousness. From the frequency of the indulgence of this spirit, it is one of the worst evils with which the Church and the world has ever been afflicted. In some congregations, it has been the source of very much evil. Those who are possessed of this unhappy fault-finding spirit are very keen-eyed to see the errors of their brethren. To their minds, there is always something wrong about which to complain, and these wrong things are magnified, and thus made to appear greater than they really are; and instead of putting the most charitable construction upon the faults of others, they will represent them in the most heinous light possible. And what makes the case still worse, instead of informing the

person himself of his fault or offence, and admonishing him in whom they have discovered something wrong, they will tell it to some one of their confidential friends, with the caution, that they do not wish it to go any farther, or to become known in the community,—they do not wish their friend to spread it abroad. He, however, again informs his friend in the same manner, and thus the matter goes from one to another until it is known to all. Immense mischief is done in this manner, and numerous disturbances raised in a congregation and community, which would be entirely prevented by obeying the law of Christ our Saviour: "Go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone: if he will hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

"Speak evil of no man." Slander no one, and be no brawler, or busy body in other men's matters. A peaceable spirit will go far towards removing the asperities of human life. The spirit of the gospel, it should be remembered, is, "Peace on earth and good will toward men." Speak evil of no one, unless justice to the truth, and the interests of religion should fully demand it. A congregation will not prosper, when its members speak evil of each other. And nothing will appear to do well in a neighborhood in which the neighbors censure, or decry each other. Avoid, therefore, a censorious spirit, and if you cannot speak well of a person, rather be silent. There is a good deal of wholesome truth in the remark of the philosopher, who said: "I have often repented that I had spoken, but never that I remained silent."

If you acquire the mastery over your own evil thoughts, feelings, and passions, you will have secured a most important end. Its attainment, therefore, should be the great object of your study, and efforts, and prayers. "He that ruleth his own spirit, is better than he that taketh a city." To conquer a censorious spirit, and to control your language

and direct your words aright, is no small accomplishment. To refrain from idle words, and to bridle your tongue, will require, as it well deserves, your serious consideration and most strenuous efforts.

By forming for yourself as perfect a Christian character as you possibly can, you will be able the most effectually to promote the good of your congregation. And by succeeding in governing your thoughts and words, you will be able to succeed in other respects also; for the apostle says: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body," James 3 : 2. Bring every thought into subjection and obedience to Christ, and endeavor to imbibe his spirit and follow his example. You will always have enough to do to correct your own faults, without becoming a complainer about the faults of others. At all events, "first cast the beam out of your own eye," correct your own faults, "and then will you see clearly to cast out the beam out of your brother's eye." First cultivate your own garden, and then reprove your neighbor for neglecting his. It is an old, but not trite proverb, "Let every one sweep before his own door."

The prophet Nehemiah, in the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, after the return of the Jews from captivity, directed the people in these words: "Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened," &c., for fear of their enemies who came to trouble them, "and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house." "Every one to be over against his house!" So it should be in the Christian Church. Every one should watch the enemy in his own heart, or "over against his house."

By following "peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," your influence for good will be felt now, and when you are dead, your memory will

long remain in the congregation ; and though dead, you will yet speak by the example of your faith and zeal. What a holy and heavenly honor to be thus the instrument of doing good ! The glory of crowned heads and conquerors is as nothing compared with it. To have it said at your demise, "This man, or this woman was undoubtedly a Christian," will be a satisfaction to your friends, and a glory also bestowed upon you from God, such as angels only can estimate. In view of it, "my mouth is open to you, my heart is enlarged."

Much more might be said on the manner of promoting the welfare of Zion ; but I leave you to fill up the balance in your own mind, and to pursue that course, which may suggest itself to you as the best. My only desire is, that you may possess a spirit of consecration to the service of your divine master. May you live a righteous life, so that you may die a happy death. May you have a desire—a longing desire—to do good, to be useful while you live, to be entirely absorbed in contemplating, loving, adoring, and serving Jesus Christ your Saviour. May you adopt the language and realize the desire of the prophet, who said: "May I die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his."

The following rules to promote harmony among the members of the Church, are here given on account of their excellence :

1. Remember that we are all subject to failings and infirmities of some kind or other.

2. Bear with, and do not magnify each other's infirmities, Gal. 5.

3. Pray one for another in your social meetings, and particularly in private, James, 1 : 6.

4. Avoid going from house to house for the purpose of hearing news, and interfering with other people's business.

5. Always turn a deaf ear to any slanderous report, and give credence to no charge brought against any person, until it be well founded.

6. If a member be in fault, tell him of it in private, before it is mentioned to others.

7. Watch against shyness of each other, and put the best construction on any action which has the appearance of opposition, or resentment.

8. Observe the just rule of Solomon, "Leave off contention before it be meddled with," Prov. 17 : 14.

9. If a member has offended, consider how glorious, how God-like it is to forgive, and how unlike a Christian it is to seek revenge, Eph. 4 : 2.

10. Lastly, consider the express injunctions of Scripture, and the beautiful example of Christ, Eph. 4 : 32 ; 1 Peter 2 : 21 ; John 13 : 5.

A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO ACKNOWLEDGES THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH IN RESPECT TO DISCIPLINE, AND WHO WISHES TO PROMOTE HER WELFARE.

O Lord, thou hast established the Church on the immutable foundation of Christ, who is the rock of ages, the same yesterday, to day and forever. I acknowledge his presence and power in the Church, through the medium of the preached word and the exercise of discipline. O may I not set at naught the Church, and so set at naught my God and Saviour. But may I be deeply sensible, how sinful it is, to reject the admonitions of the Church, and the teachings of thy word and providence. "Thy law, O Lord, is perfect, converting the soul : thy testimony is sure, making wise the simple : thy statutes are right, rejoicing the heart : thy commandment is pure, enlightening the eyes : thy fear is clean, enduring forever : thy judgments are true and righteous altogether :

more to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping of them, there is great reward. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

O Lord, grant me thy Holy Spirit. May I live in the Spirit. May I abide in the element of thy word and Spirit. O Lord! take possession of my heart and rule within me and thereby banish unholy thoughts and feelings. I fear, I fear, O Lord! I fear to be left to myself, and to become the prey of my evil passions and of temptations. O that I might be wholly absorbed in loving, adoring, serving and praising thee. Help me, O God! I fall into thine arms; for I feel my weakness. Lift me up, O God, and strengthen me. "Uphold me with thy free Spirit, then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." O that thou wouldst rule in me, and make me pure as thou art pure: and do thou also bring all men to submit to the blessed reign of Jesus. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER'S RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE; DANGER OF DECLENSION; THE STEPS OF DECLENSION POINTED OUT.

"*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.*"
"*Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.*"

It is desirable, that, as a believer in the revelation which God has given of his Son in the Church, you should know no abatement of love to his cause, and no cessation of zeal for the honor and glory of God. But notwithstanding the desirableness of retaining the fervor of first love, you will probably find ere you expected it, a listlessness and inattention toward the objects of faith and the duties incumbent upon you, taking possession of your mind. I will, therefore, follow you through several stages of religious experience, and endeavor to point out your danger, and prevent, if possible, your falling under the power of temptation and the weakness of the flesh.

Your very zeal and activity in the cause of religion may lead to a declension of piety. In the performance of the outward and more general public duties in the congregation and in the family, you may come to neglect by degrees more and more the cultivation of the inward man—the heart—whence are the issues of life, and you may lose those motives to disinterested benevolence, as well as that humility which should ever characterize the child of God. Your left hand may, as it were, begin to calculate what your right hand is doing. You may begin to compromise the rigid purity of God's law, and exchange the holy motives of the gospel for motives of expediency. You may abridge the

rigid austerity of a heavenly discipline, and in the pursuit of the great and glorious ends of revealed religion, substitute for the divinely appointed means, those of your own devising, and endeavor to accomplish by a shorter route, and in a way more congenial to the carnal mind what can only be obtained by that covenant which is "well ordered in all things and sure."

Humility of mind may give place to pride and ambition. You may begin to admire your previous humility and thus destroy it. You may desire to be useful from motives of self-complacency. You may wish the honors of holiness, rather than holiness itself. You may desire heaven, rather than holiness in connection with it, and holiness for its own sake.

True, not every abatement of progress is an evidence of the diminution of love and zeal, and of the power of the inward life of faith; just as eddies in a stream of water are no evidence of the stream's ceasing to flow. The stream of the soul's inward life may still be flowing and pressing onward, notwithstanding the hindrances and obstructions in its way. Though there may be little outward appearance of progress, the soul may be gathering momentum to break over its barriers and proceed on its heaven-ward course. The Christian hero may be hindered, in his race, by manifold temptations; but his soul is still eagerly pressing toward the goal, for the prize of his high calling. It is not the cessation of high-wrought feelings that constitutes, of itself, a declension in religion. Emotions are evanescent. High emotions are produced only on extraordinary occasions. In the beginning of the Christian life they are greater than afterward, owing to novelty. The young child is more moved by his feelings than the aged sire. Religion consists chiefly "in the resolution of the will for God," and in a careful avoiding of sin, and a conscientious perform

ance of duty, looking to the motives by which we are actuated, and humbling ourselves before God in deep humility, exercising daily repentance toward him and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and realizing thus the soul-satisfying influence of self-abasement, being assured that in due time we shall be exalted.

That declension of which we speak consists chiefly in "a forgetfulness of divine objects, and a remissness in those various duties to which we stand engaged by that solemn surrender which we have made of ourselves to God." To the danger of this lukewarmness you stand constantly exposed. It will, therefore, be proper to notice some of the symptoms of this state; and "so much the more, because these declensions are often unobserved by those who are the subjects of them, like the gray hairs which were upon Ephraim, when he knew it not."

1. Spiritual mindedness cannot be maintained in freshness and vigor without daily, deep meditation, and heartfelt prayer, and direct communion with God. It is this direct communion with God which is implied in secret prayer. The first thing, therefore, in which spiritual decay will manifest itself, will be in the neglect of the duties of the closet. You may still keep up the practice of secret prayer in form, but you will have lost much of its power, and instead of that solemn awe and reverence which formerly filled your soul in your approaches to the throne of grace, you will feel but little impression in the act, from the awful and good Being into whose presence you come. Instead of having direct communion with him, as a being who really exists and is the rewarder of all that diligently seek him, you will scarcely realize that you are addressing the high and holy Being who inhabits eternity.

In consequence of neglecting meditation and the examining of your motives and thoughts, and ceasing to consider

the claims of God's law and the necessity of divine aid to help you to obey the precepts of Jehovah, so as not to be a stumbling block in the way of the progress of the religion of Jesus Christ, and the advancement of the dearest interests of immortal souls, you will not have those deep searchings of heart which you were wont to have in these secret exercises, nor those wrestling supplications to offer, as of one who feels as though he cannot be denied his requests, and whose spiritual favors are dearer to him than life itself, which you were accustomed to offer in the beginning of your Christian course. The multiplicity of your engagements, which before did not damp your ardor in prayer, will now so fill your mind as to leave you little or no time, nor heart to engage in this duty. Your waking thoughts in the morning, which before were of God and heavenly things, will now be of the world and worldly enjoyments. The sweet thoughts of Deity in your opening waking mind will be exchanged for thoughts of worldly good. Once your dreams were of "glory in the Church by Christ Jesus," and of God in providence and creation, and of glory in heaven; and you could say with the Psalmist: "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! When I awake I am still with thee." But now, they are of houses and lands, or of lascivious objects and visions of earthly grandeur and earthly pleasure. There is no beauty in Christ, comparatively speaking, that you should desire him. "To live," will not appear to you to be Christ, neither will death appear to you to be gain. Blasphemous thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will say in your heart, if not with your lips: "What profit shall we have if we pray unto him?" "What profit is it, that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?"

2. At first, this declining state of piety in you will not

be observed either by yourself or by others; but, ere long the effect may be seen in a diminution of zeal, and of sympathy in the cause of your Master. At least, it may be seen by your brethren and associates, though unobserved by yourself. For, although men are tardy in noticing that which is good, and rendering to every one his due proportion of respect and consideration, they are quick in observing the sympathies of others toward themselves and toward God. Where the fire of a religious love has once been enkindled in the heart, the declension of it will be seen in the public acts, sooner or later.

There is a spirit in man which is very susceptible of impressions. Hence it is said: "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." And as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Sympathy speaks from the eye, the countenance, the gestures, the manners, and the little trivial actions of men, as well as from words spoken with the lips.

3. If now your spiritual disease is not checked in its first symptoms, it will extend itself further, and be noticed in the more public walks of life. Not to speak of the family, your behavior in the congregation will be changed. Instead of that devout attention and serious manner which was seen in you at first, a carelessness and inattention may be observed. The love of God and his truth having become lukewarm, the conduct in the house of God will become affected in a manner corresponding with the sentiments of the heart. Being no longer sensibly impressed with your responsibility which is expressed by the Apostle, when he says, "Keep yourselves in the love of God," you will manifest your coldness when his truth is proclaimed, and when you address him in prayer, as also when you are called upon to "contribute to the necessities of the saints," and to the advancement of the benevolent operations of the Church.

4. The love of God and divine things having abated, the next symptom of your spiritual decay will appear in a loss of affection for the brethren. You will no more feel an overflowing desire to benefit them, to promote their spiritual and temporal welfare. Instead of that charity which covers a multitude of sins, you will possess a sensitiveness which will take offence at the veriest trifle.

5. Having thus hedged up the way against the attractions of the cross, the next steps in the backward course, will be an occasional absence,—making allowance for unavoidable circumstances,—from that place which formerly found you such a punctual hearer of the word of God.

6. This is already going far in the downward progress, and it may well give you cause of serious alarm, and put you upon the inquiry whether you did not begin too much under the impulse of feeling and animal excitement, and from selfish motives, rather than from calm reflection and a settled purpose to serve God, after a serious study of his word and the plan of salvation.

7. On the other hand, although you may have soberly and deliberately chosen the service of God, after a full consideration of your responsibilities, not being subject to the extremes of one who is more moved by his feelings, than by his understanding and judgment, your case may agree in the main with the one above described, and if not arrested in your course by a prompt and speedy retracing of your steps, you will become more and more worldly minded. Material interests, like a canker, will eat out the heart of your piety. There are so many allurements in the wealth, the honors, and enjoyments of the world, that you are constantly exposed to this danger; especially if you have already let down the ardor of your zeal for spiritual things. Your love for the Church having abated, your love for the world will increase. There is a constant liability to lose the

appreciation of spiritual blessings, the moment we cease to contemplate them; and, at the same time, there is a constant tendency toward an inordinate affection for the good things of this world. If this latter is not the first cause of your decline in religion, it will, at least, be found to operate powerfully in the last stages of religious declension.

Instead of "walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost," and giving the pre-eminence to those things which pertain to the kingdom of God, you will devote the greater part of your time, talents, thoughts, and affections to material interests, and to the gratification of the flesh. In this state of mind, the pleasures of frivolous company, and of idle, worldly conversation, will be preferred to communion with God at "the hour of prayer." The mind will be preoccupied with thoughts of these associations, more or less day and night. Schemes and efforts for the acquisition of wealth will so occupy your mind, that you will devote little or no time to religious devotions, and to the cultivation of religious knowledge. Religious books, together with the Bible, will lose their attractiveness and interest. You will no more study religious subjects and doctrines with the love of one who is interested in them.

8. And what makes the case still worse, is the fact, that this disordered state of mind may lead you into a prejudice against strictness in religion, and this prejudice will prevent a conviction of sin, which is necessary as the first step in your recovery, and the first means for your restoration. "Your great enemy may so far succeed in his attempts against you, as to persuade you that you have lost nothing in religion, when you have lost almost all. He may very probably lead you to conclude that your former devotional frames were mere fits of enthusiasm, and that the holy regularity of your walk before God was an unnecessary strictness and scrupulosity." Nay more, you may imagine it an

improvement of the understanding to have imbibed more liberal sentiments in regard to doctrine and discipline, and suppose, that, to treat your neighbor with humanity and good nature, without reproving sin upon him,—unless it be the sin of overmuch strictness—or making direct efforts for his spiritual and temporal welfare, must constitute a righteous person, while, at the same time, "he pretends not to converse much with God, provided he only *think* respectfully of him, and do not provoke him by any gross immoralities."

9. If now you take into consideration the fact, that, in this state of mind, you stand "on the confines of gross apostacy into deliberate and presumptuous sin," you may well be alarmed for your soul. And here I may put the question to you: What will become of you, if you do not recover yourself from these snares of Satan? You will go on in the downward course until you not only *stand* in the way of sinners, but *sit* in the seat of the scornful, and finally be of the number of those who shall not stand in the judgment of the great day, nor in the congregation of the righteous in heaven.

10. But I hope better things of you, and, therefore, exhort you to use the means for securing your safety immediately. Let nothing prevent you from considering thoroughly and fully your danger, and the way of escape. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

Think first, of your union with Christ. This is intimate and real, if you have been truly converted. It is represented under the figure of a branch and the vine. "I am the vine," says the Saviour, "and ye are the branches: he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." Christ is present with you for the very purpose of carrying on the work of your salvation. You should, therefore, feel the

horrible nature of the sin of grieving his majesty, grace and Spirit. Is Christ in you to work in you to will and to do of his good pleasure, and to transform you into his own likeness ; and shall you suffer sin to reign in your mortal body and obey the lusts of the flesh? Think of the fact, that Christ and the Holy Spirit are prompting you to heavenly mindedness, and shall you resist these influences, and grieve the Holy Spirit, wound your Saviour and dishonor your Heavenly Father. The Father is present with you in the works of creation and providence, and in the gift of his Son, and the institutions of religion, governing and controling all in mercy and love toward you. "The love of the Father" is with you. Christ is with you and in you the power of a new and endless life. The Holy Spirit is present to lead you to Christ, to testify of Christ, and to be the influencing power and the element in which Christ as your life may have free course and be glorified. "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" are with you.

If you have been truly converted, it is believed that you will not be at ease in sin and in lukewarmness. You will not forsake Christ, neither will Christ forsake you. This the Saviour intimates in the parable of the sower. The way-side hearer never receives the seed truly in his heart. "He understandeth it not." The stony-ground hearer receives the word with joy, but having "no root in himself" he endures only a little while. He who receives the seed among thorns has it choked by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. But he who receives the word into an open heart—a heart of faith—receives it into good ground, and understands it and brings forth fruit.

The best evidence of a true Christian is a constant anxiety to do the will of God, and to press forward in a life of piety. It is this which is the proof of your conversion at

the beginning; and whenever the want of this is discovered, you may well be alarmed lest you were never truly converted. The consciousness of a union with Christ can only be enjoyed through faith, and faith is prompted by the Holy Spirit, whilst on the part of him who believes it is a yielding to that influence and a taking hold of the objects of faith—that is, of the things which are revealed and promised in the gospel. This union with the Godhead implies direct communion with God in prayer, and a life corresponding with the nature and design of such communion. It is only when you live a life of sincere prayer, that you are truly sensible of the reason why you are a Christian. It is this which will give you the witness in yourself and the reason of the hope which is in you.

11. Hence you should repair immediately to the forsaken altar of prayer, and in secret places before God confess your sins. Let the closet, that place which first witnessed your turning to God, as a member of his Church, witness the return of a backsliding child in humble penitence, bewailing his sins. Consider your sins and particularize them. Especially view them as dishonorable to God in the sight of men, and of angels who have seen them, and who, instead of beholding the fruits of holiness, have beheld you serving sin and Satan, and thus virtually erasing your name from the list of the pious, and declaring your place among the righteous forfeited by your transgressions. O the dreadful condition of a soul, without a rightful place among the Churches of the saints. Consider it well in secret before God.

12. Take the time also to read and study the Scriptures. Abstract yourself from the cares of the world to such an extent, that you shall be able to read devotionally a portion of the word of God statedly, and to give deep attention to what you read. Thus conviction will flash upon your mind,

and your understanding will be enlightened, when otherwise it might remain in darkness.

13. And with all this, go to the sacramental altar, and there renew your vows and your strength to perform them in the use of the elements of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, showing forth your Lord's death with an affectionate remembrance, and feasting on the heavenly manna, and becoming more and more closely united to the glorified body of Jesus in heaven through faith of the operation of God.

14. I would only add, in the language of another, "that it is necessary to take these precautions as soon as possible, or you will probably find a much swifter progress than you are aware in the downhill road; and you may possibly be left of God, to fall into some gross and aggravated sin, so as to fill your conscience with an agony and horror which the pain of 'broken bones' can but imperfectly express."

A PRAYER FOR ONE UNDER SPIRITUAL DECAY.

[*Doddridge.*]

Eternal and unchangeable Jehovah! thy perfection and glories are, like thy being, immutable. Jesus thy Son, is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. The eternal world, to which I am hastening, is always equally important, and presses upon the attentive mind for a more fixed and solemn regard, in proportion to the degree in which it comes nearer and nearer. But alas! my views and my affections, and my best resolutions are continually varying, like this poor body, which goes through daily and hourly alterations in its state and circumstances. Whence, O Lord! whence this sad change which I now experience in the frame and temper of my mind toward thee? Whence this alienation of my soul from thee? Why can I not come to thee with all the endearments of filial love, as I once could? Why is thy service so remissly attended, if attended at all? And why are the exercises

of it, which were once my greatest pleasure, become a burden to me? Where, O God! is the blessedness I once spake of, when my joy in thee as my heavenly Father was so conspicuous that strangers might have observed it, and when my heart did so overflow with love to thee, and with zeal for thy service, that it was matter of self-denial to me to limit and restrain the genuine expressions of those strong emotions of my soul, even where prudence and duty required it?

Alas, Lord! whither am I fallen? Thine eye sees me still; but, oh! how unlike what it once saw me! Cold and insensible as I am, I must blush on the reflection. Thou seest me in secret, and seest me perhaps often amusing myself with trifles, in those seasons which I used solemnly to devote to thine immediate service. Thou seest me coming into thy presence as by constraint; and when I am before thee so straitened in my spirit, that I hardly know what to say to thee, though thou art the God with whom I have to do; and though the keeping up a humble and dutiful correspondence with thee, is beyond all comparison, the most important business of my life. And even when I am speaking to thee, with how much coldness and formality is it! It is perhaps the work of imagination, the labor of the lips; but where are those ardent desires, those intense breathings after God, which I once felt? Where is that pleasing repose in thee, which I was once conscious of, as being near my divine rest, as being happy in that nearness, and resolving that, if possible, I would no more be removed from it? But, oh! how far am I removed? When these short devotions, if they may be called devotions, are over, in what long intervals do I forget thee, and appear so little animated by thy love, so little devoted to thy service, that a stranger might converse with me a considerable time, without knowing that I had ever formed any acquaintance with thee, without discovering that I had so much as known or heard anything of God? Thou callest me to thine house, O Lord! on thine own day; but how heartless are my services there! I present thee no more than my body; my thoughts and affections are engrossed with other objects, while I draw near thee with my mouth, and honor thee with my lips. Thou callest me to thy table; but my heart is so frozen that it hardly melts even at the foot

of the cross, hardly feels any efficacy in the blood of Jesus. O wretched creature that I am! Unworthy of being called thine! Unworthy of a place among thy children, or of the meanest situation in thy family; rather worthy to be cast out, to be forsaken, yea, to be utterly destroyed!

Is this, Lord, the service which I once promised, and which thou hast so many thousand reasons to expect? Are these the returns I am making for thy daily providential care, for the sacrifice of thy Son, for the communications of the Spirit, for the pardon of my numberless aggravated sins, for the hopes, the undeserved and so often forfeited hopes of eternal glory?

Lord, I am ashamed to stand or kneel before thee. But pity me, I beseech thee, for I am a pitiable object indeed, my soul cleaveth unto the dust, and lays itself as in the dust before thee, but, O quicken me according to thy word. Let me trifle no longer, for I am upon the brink of a precipice! I am thinking of my ways. O give me grace to turn my feet unto thy testimonies, to make haste without any farther delay, that I may keep thy commandments! Search me, O Lord! and try me. Go to the first root of this distemper, which spreads itself over my soul, and recover me from it! Represent sin unto me, O Lord! I beseech thee, that I may see it with abhorrence! and represent the Lord Jesus Christ to me in such a light, that I may look upon him and mourn, that I may look on him and love! May I awaken from this stupid lethargy into which I am sinking, and may Christ give me more abundant degrees of spiritual life and activity than I have ever yet received! and may I be so quickened and animated by him, that I may make a more speedy and exemplary progress than in my best days I have ever yet done! Send down upon me, O Lord! in a more rich and abundant effusion, thy good Spirit. May he dwell in me as a temple which he has consecrated to himself! and while all the service is directed and governed by him, may holy and acceptable sacrifices be continually offered! May the increase be constant, and may it be fragrant! May the sacred fire burn and blaze perpetually! And may none of its vessels be profaned, by being employed for an unholy or forbidden use! Amen.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER FALLING INTO OPEN SIN; THE MEANS OF RECOVERY POINTED OUT.

"*And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" Acts 2 : 21.

HAPPY would it be for you, were you not to know any worse state than that described in the last chapter. But, alas, it is possible to become even more deeply wounded in spirit, and more entirely diseased in soul, than you are willing now to believe, or than you have, as yet experienced. You will, perhaps, hope for a recovery, and anxiously desire better days of spiritual experience at some time in the future, and make some feeble efforts to accomplish your desire. Your soul may still fall into a deeper and still deeper lethargy, and your conscience into a more profound slumber than ever, in spite of all your feeble efforts. In consequence of this lukewarmness which creeps over your spirit, like a chill over the body, you may finally fall into the commission of acts of wickedness, which you now regard with the deepest abhorrence. You may now, with the heroic spirit of a martyr, think it better for you to die than to be guilty of certain crimes against the Lord. Peter thought so too. "Though I should die with thee," said he "yet will I not deny thee," and yet he fell into that very sin, of which he was so confident that he was in no danger. While you may, therefore, be endeavoring to keep within the bounds of propriety and Christian duty, and hoping for a better future, and even at times be zealous for religion and religious doctrines, before you are aware of danger, you may commit an

open and deliberate sin. "Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall." Your only safety is in a wakeful attention and in the help of the Lord. You should double your diligence, and cast yourself on your knees in secret prayer, and, with a mighty effort, surrender yourself to the guidance of the Saviour. But O, if you do fall, and like Peter, bring reproach upon Christ and his cause, how deep will be your wounds, and how quickly will your comforts dry up, and leave you the bitterness of reflection and the griefs of remorse? If you fall only once into a disciplinable offence, your sorrows will be many. But, O! the very contemplation of the weakened moral power it will bring with it, and of the subsequent offences to which it may lead, will be enough to sicken the heart, and will multiply your sorrows exceedingly.

And to aggravate the miseries of your calamity, God may, for a while, hide his face from you. Your sins will cause him to turn away from you, and withhold the comforts of the Spirit. Your sins, so long continued and multiplied, are the cause of your distress. "Your iniquities," says the prophet to the Jews, "have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you." The meaning of the expression, "hiding of God's face," may be more fully understood by the opposite phrase of God's "causing his face to shine upon a person, or lifting up upon him the light of his countenance." In this, there seems to be an allusion to the pleasant and delightful appearance of the face of a friend, when he beholds or converses with one whom he loves and in whom he delights. Thus Job's friends conversed with him. Speaking of their regard for him, he says, "If I smiled upon them, they believed it not, and the light of my countenance they cast not down;" that is, they were careful to do nothing to displease me, or to cloud my brow. And David desiring the mani-

festation of God's favors, says, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me," having allusion, probably, to the bright light of the Shekina in the temple on some public occasions, which was both a sign and an evidence of the divine presence and favor. Hence for God to "hide his face," implies the withholding of his favors and is a mark of his displeasure. "Thou hast hid thy face from us," as a friend turns toward us the cold shoulder, "and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities." Such is the meaning of the phrase, "hiding of God's face." It is used by Christians to denote the divine displeasure.

To make the gloom still greater, bodily affliction and worldly cares and troubles may come in to fill up the cup of your sorrows. An open heart before the Lord, and the light of his countenance beaming upon the soul, with the communications of his grace at the time of prayer, may lighten afflictions, and worldly cares, and even sweeten them. But, as sin has obscured the attributes of the Deity from your moral sight, and your mental vision has become dim by reason of transgression, these things are an intolerable load upon your soul. Afflictions and troubles at any time, may produce a melancholy spirit, and even make it appear as though God had withdrawn the light of his countenance when he has not. If, however, to this, a course of deliberate sinning is added, they will produce the most direful consequences, ending, perhaps, as in the case of Job, in murmurings against God, and dishonoring his holy name.

It is expected, that you will have your dark days. But dark indeed will be the day when you resolve to sin against God, and to set at naught his warnings. "It is enough to wound one's heart to think how yours will be wounded; how all your comforts, and evidences and hopes will be clouded; what thick darkness will spread itself on every side; so that neither sun, moon, nor stars will appear in your heaven.

Your spiritual consolations will be gone, and your temporal enjoyments will be rendered tasteless and insipid. And if afflictions be sent, as probably they may, in order to reclaim you, a consciousness of guilt will sharpen and envenom the dart. Then will the enemy of your soul, with all his art and power, rise up against you, encouraged by your fall, and laboring to trample you down in utter hopeless ruin. He will persuade you, that you are already undone, beyond recovery. He will suggest, that it signifies nothing to attempt it any more; for that every effort, every amendment, every act of repentance, will but make your case so much the worse, and plunge you lower and lower into hell. Do not, however, yield to his suggestions. Your case is deplorable indeed. But to rest in your present condition, and to become careless, would be to yield yourself, bound hand and foot, a prisoner to Satan.

Though you may have sinned greatly before God and the world, and your sin has become known to the community, and this fact been reported to you; yet, blessed be God, your case is not altogether hopeless. Your "wounds are corrupt because of your foolishness;" but they are not incurable. In your depths of wo, you may be assured that "there is a balm in Gilead, and that there is a physician there." Out of the depths of your miseries, therefore, cry unto the Lord, as David did, when he had sinned, and said: "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord." God is indeed just, and cannot do otherwise than frown upon your sins. But he is also merciful, and will forgive the penitent and believing soul who thus fears to fall into sin again, and to incur the Lord's displeasure. With the Psalmist such an one can say: "But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." Arise, therefore, from your melancholy and deplorable condition, and call on the name of the Lord. Let it, however, be done immediately.

Procrastination will harden the heart, and bring about a coldness and indifference to your spiritual interests, and consequently make it more and more difficult for you to return. Think not you will add one other sin to your list and then repent; but immediately unbosom your heart before God; fall down before him in secret prayer, and think of every sin and every aggravating circumstance which heightens your guilt, and confess all with genuine sorrow. Turn your very eye upon your sins, and upon your heart, and consider the evil desires, inclinations, thoughts and feelings you have cherished which a holy God disapproves, and which have led to your outward acts of transgression.

The earnest and wrestling prayer of a true penitent will be heard. If you will reflect upon your condition, look at your sins and your peril, and pray for the teaching of God's Spirit, you will obtain an earnest and believing heart. Make haste to escape from the danger of falling yet deeper into sin. "Escape as for thy life," and "give not sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids," until you have earnestly sought a reconciliation with God, and obtained the conscious indwelling of the Holy Comforter. "Lie not down upon your bed under unpardoned guilt, lest evil overtake you; lest the sword of divine justice shall smite you, and while you purpose to return to-morrow, you should this night go and take possession of hell."

Moreover, if your sin involve your neighbor, or a fellow church-member, go to him immediately, on the first opportunity, and make confession and ask pardon of God and of your neighbor for your faults, according to the direction of the Saviour: "If thou bring thy gift before the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar; first go and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." Do not continue to engage in prayer and worship, without

endeavoring to become reconciled to those who are offended with you. To bear malice toward any one with whom you are associated in a church relationship, will aggravate your sins greatly, and break the bond of charity, and land you in the lowest depths of religious declension. To refuse obstinately and maliciously to confess your fault to him, whom you have wronged in any way, will obscure the light of God's countenance from your view, and drive you farther and farther from his presence. It is in the region of hell that men are "hateful and hating one another." Suffer not, therefore, the gangrene of malice to continue, but endeavor, as far as you are concerned, to remove it immediately, in order that brotherly love may continue.

Or, if you have incurred the censure of the Church, give heed to her admonitions with a penitent and submissive heart. A broken heart God will not despise. To this man will he look, even to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembles at his word. The proud he knows afar off; he keeps them at a distance; but the humble and penitent he receives to his bosom. Do not refuse to humble yourself to the condition of a penitent, because your standing in society may be above the common condition; and because the officers of the church may be your inferiors in some respect. If you are really guilty suffer not a moment to pass in hesitancy. Like the prodigal son, resolve to return immediately. Do not endeavor to save appearances and avoid the mortification of a humiliation before the church. The mortifying pain, occasioned by the knowledge which the public and the congregation have of your sin, is intended, under God, to be an excellent medicine for the restoration of your spiritual health. If, however, you excuse yourself and avoid appearing as a penitent pleading for pardon, and acknowledging your guilt before the officers of the church, this remedy of discipline, which is ordained of God for the

cure of sin, will be useless to you. Be wise, therefore, and be wise in time. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy." Make confession, therefore, and let it be done as promptly as possible. The day of mercy may otherwise close, and the things which belong to your peace be forever hid from your eyes, as they were from Achan, the troubler of Israel.

Confess your fault without delay. Fully and frankly open your mind, and entreat pardon from those whom you have offended. In the presence of your reconciling friends —the consistory of the congregation—"confess your faults one to another, and pray one for the other, that ye may be healed." Then, and not till then, will you be in the way to peace. Not by palliating a fault, not by making vain excuses, not by objecting to the manner in which others may have treated you, and not by becoming offended with the severe reproofs and faithful admonitions of any, can you obtain peace of conscience. Such sensibility is not from the divine Spirit; but is rather the product of the remains of the carnal mind, of pride and self-love. The wisdom which is from above will rather prompt you to glorify God, by submitting to deserved blame; and will lead you to fear deceiving others into a more favorable opinion of yourself than you inwardly know you deserve.

"These are the sentiments which God gives to the sincere penitent." An enlightened reason, a tender conscience, and an honest heart, for which the true church-member is distinguished, will restore him to credit and regard among others. "There is something so honorable in the frank acknowledgment of a fault, and in deep humiliation for it, that all who see it must needs approve it." This is illustrated in the following example taken from among the primitive Christians:*

* Coleman's Antiquities.

"The emperor, Theodosius, who flourished about the year 370, was a prince whose character was adorned with many virtues, and who added to the many other excellent qualities that distinguished him, a firm and sincere attachment to the gospel of Christ. As the best of men, however, have their besetting sins, and their inherent faults, Theodosius inherited the infirmity of a keen and impetuous temper, which, on several occasions, hurried him to the inconsiderate adoption of measures which he afterwards found cause bitterly to lament. The most memorable of these occasions was the affair of Thessalonica. In that city of Macedonia, some enactments of the emperor had given so great and universal dissatisfaction to the inhabitants, that they assembled in an uproar, threatening to set the imperial orders at defiance, and sufficiently indicating their determined spirit of resistance by an attack upon the garrison, which was signalized by the massacre of the commanding officer, and several of the soldiery.

The intelligence of this untoward event so incensed Theodosius, that he forthwith issued his mandate for reducing the whole city to ashes; and the bloody edict would have been carried into prompt execution by the military, who participated in the feelings of their monarch, and breathed revenge for the loss of their slaughtered comrades, had not some Christian bishops, by their powerful and importunate intercessions, prevailed on the emperor reluctantly to recal his orders. The prime minister, however, was implacable, and by his incessant representations to his imperial master, that so ill-timed clemency would produce the greatest detriment to the public service, and weaken the hands of the government, especially in the provinces, succeeded in inducing Theodosius to re-issue his command for exterminating the Thessalonians with fire and sword. Seldom have the annals of history been stained with so foul a deed of

perfidy and baseness. Proclamation having been made, that on a set day, the civil authorities would treat the populace to an exhibition of the favorite games, a vast concourse assembled, and the moment all eyes were riveted on the spot, expecting the spectacle to commence, bands of soldiery rushed furiously from all quarters on the defenceless crowd, slaughtering all without distinction of age, sex, or condition. So dreadful was the massacre, that within three hours, seven thousand people were stretched lifeless on the ground. Meanwhile a messenger had been posting night and day, from the palace of the emperor with a commission to stop the proceedings, the emperor having no sooner consented to the massacre than he relented; but the deputy did not arrive till the unfortunate Thessalonica had become a city of the dead, and Theodosius had to sustain in the eyes of God and man the guilt of such unparalelled cruelty.

Not long after, circumstances occurred which rendered it necessary for the emperor to repair to Milan, when the celebrated Ambrose, bishop of the place, wrote him a letter, in which he severely reproached him for his base and horrible treatment of the Thessalonians. Nothing is known of the reception given to this letter, or of any further correspondence which may have passed between them on the subject, until, on the Lord's day, the emperor proceeding to public worship, Ambrose met him at the gates of the church, and peremptorily refused to admit him. This proceeding of Ambrose, extraordinary as it may appear to us, could not have been surprising nor unexpected to his sovereign, who was well aware that the austere discipline of the times doomed offenders of every description to wait in the area or the porticos of the church, and beg the forgiveness and the prayers of the faithful, before they were permitted to reach the lowest station of the penitents. Self-love, however, or

a secret pride in his exalted station, might perhaps have led Theodosius to hope, that the ordinary severity of the Church would be relaxed in his favor—more especially, as the act imputed to him as a crime, was justified by many urgent considerations of state policy; and under this delusion, he made for the church, never dreaming, it would seem, that whatever demur the minister of Christ might make, he would have the boldness to arrest the progress of an emperor in the presence of his courtiers, and of the whole congregation. But the fear of man was never known to have made Ambrose flinch from his duty; and, heedless of every consideration, but that of fidelity to the cause and the honor of his heavenly Master, he planted himself on the threshhold of the church, and vowed, that neither bribes nor menaces would induce him to admit, into the temple of the God of peace, a royal criminal, red with the blood of thousands, who were his brethren,—all of them by the ties of a common nature,—many of them by the bonds of a common faith.

Theodosius, thus suddenly put on his self-defence, took refuge in the history of David, who was also a sovereign; and who, though he had combined the guilt of adultery with that of murder, was yet pardoned and restored to favor by God himself, on the confession of his sins. 'You have resembled David in his crime,' replied the inflexible Ambrose, 'resemble him also in his repentance.' Self-convicted and abashed, the emperor abandoned all further attempts; and, returning to his palace, during eight months continued in a state of excommunication from Christian fellowship, bearing all the ignominy, and stooping to all the humiliating acts required of those who underwent the discipline of the Church.

As the first annual season of communion approached, the anxiety of the emperor to participate became extreme. Often, in the paroxisms of his grief, did he say to the coun-

sellor, who had advised the Draconic edict against the Thessalonians, 'Servants and beggars have liberty to join in worship and communion, but to me the church doors, and consequently the gates of heaven, are closed; for so the Lord hath decreed, 'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.'

At length it was agreed between the prince and his favorite, that the latter should seek an interview with Ambrose, and endeavor to gain him over to employ a privilege of his order,—that of abridging, in certain circumstances, the period appointed for the duration of church discipline. The eagerness of his royal master could not wait his return, and meeting him on his way, he was greeted with the unwelcome intelligence, that the faithful bishop considered it a violation of his duty, to remit any part of the just censures of the Church; and that nothing but submission to the shame and degradation of a public confession of his sins could accomplish the object which was dearest to the heart of the royal penitent. On an appointed day, accordingly, Theodosius appeared in the church of Milan, clothed in sackcloth; and, acknowledging the heinousness of his offence; the just sentence by which he forfeited the communion of the faithful, and the profound sorrow he now felt for having authorized so gross an outrage on the laws of heaven and the rights of humanity, was received, with the unanimous consent of the whole congregation, once more in the bosom of Christian society. Nothing can afford a better test of the simplicity and godly sincerity of the Christian emperor, than his readiness to assume, in presence of his people, an attitude so humiliating.

How deep must have been his repentance toward God,—how strong his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,—and how many plausible reasons of public expediency and personal honor must he have had to encounter, before he could bring

himself, in the face of a crowded assembly, to say, as he entered, 'My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken thou me, according to thy word;' and before he could throw himself prostrate on the ground, to implore the pardon of God and the forgiveness of his fellow men! This extraordinary history affords an illustrious example of genuine repentance, and exhibits in no less memorable light, the strictness and impartiality of primitive discipline."

So, dear reader, you who have declined from the ways of God, and neglected to cultivate the Christian temper, and to rule your own spirit; and have brought scandal on the Church, and reproach on the cause of Christ, refuse not the correction of those who are over you in the Lord and admonish you. "The kingdom of God is not only in word, but in power." What the Church binds on earth, according to the will of God and by the rules he has given her, is bound in heaven. What she declares thus to be done, is the same as if it were declared from heaven. And, O! the awful condition of one, who is debarred from heaven, and from the communion of the Church, where Jesus, the ever-living high-priest, who has poured forth his life's blood as an oblation, and given his body as a sacrifice, ever stands to reconcile offending man with God, and to pour the pure stream of the water of life into the thirsting soul, and to feed it with heavenly bread. The situation of the guilty criminal, who has thus wounded the Saviour in the house of his friends, ought not to be endured without a shudder of horror, and without the deepest and most heart-felt repentance.

But, on the other hand, a person may be guilty of the most sad and deplorable apostacy, without his sin coming to the knowledge of the community, or of the Church. If such be the case with you whom I am addressing, let me warn you to remember that the all-seeing eye of Him is upon you, to whom chiefly, in any circumstances, you are to

make your acknowledgments of guilt, and whom chiefly you should have in view in all your actions as a church-member, in order that what you do, you may do as unto God and not merely unto men. And though the ear of man may not have heard, nor the eye of man perceived your guilt, omit not to repent of it in the secret exercises of the closet, and to confirm the profession of your sincerity by the use of the solemn and melting sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

And when all this is done, do not suppose that, because you have derived comfort and peace from the means of grace, and assurance from the Holy Spirit of the pardon of sin, the guilt of your apostacy is to be forgotten at once. Bear it still in mind for future caution ; and together with the other sins of your past life, bring it into review to humble you for your folly and the wounds it occasioned. Let the sense of past abominations remain, in order, as it is said in the Scriptures, "That thou mayest remember thy ways, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, even when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord."

Having thus far followed you through the several steps of your retrograde course in departing from the Lord, and having held up to your view the remedy for your fall, "let me entreat you, if now, upon the whole, you desire to attain such a temper as has been described, and to return to such steps as have been directed, immediately to fall down before God, and pour out your heart in his presence, in language like the following:

A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO HAS FALLEN INTO GROSS SIN AFTER RELIGIOUS RESOLUTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTS.

O, thou almighty and holy God! who art perfect in wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth; and who art worshipped by holy

beings in heaven, who ascribe unto thee praise and dominion, saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God omnipotent, which was, and is, and is to come;" and whose service is pure, being unmixed with sin and pollution; when I consider that thou dost require me, at least, to approximate the service of angels, rendering to thee, in character and in kind, an obedience similar to that rendered by the angels in thy immediate presence, in laboring and praying that thy will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven; I am confounded and humbled in the dust before thee. For I have fallen far below the standard, not only of the holy retinue around thy throne above, but of that which is established in the Church militant below. By reason of sin and the darkness of my understanding and the hidings of thy face, I can scarcely tell whether I do choose thy service or the service of Satan; and whether or no I am to be classed with "the angels that kept not their first estate, and are reserved in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."

O God! when I behold my degradation in sin; when I behold my fallen estate, and my estrangement from thee and thy ways, I lament my unfortunate and miserable condition. I feel the curse of sin to be upon me. I feel, indeed, that I was conceived and born in sin, and I am constrained to lament and bewail the calamity that has befallen me, by the loss of that heaven-born innocence, in which my first parents were created, in consequence of whose sin, happiness was banished from the human mind and the very ground was cursed, so that

> "earth felt the wound
> And nature, from her seat, sighing through all her works,
> Gave signs of wo that all was lost,"

and in consequence of which double anathema, "the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain together until now."

But more especially do I lament my own actual transgressions during my unconverted state, when thou mightest justly have given me over to death and everlasting wo. But above all, after I had taken upon me the profession of thy name, and hoped that I had been renewed in the image of him who created me, and had entered on the beginning of heavenly obedience, having received

the promise of grace to assist me—to fall away, as I have done, into the commission of the most horrible sins against my God and Saviour, in spite of all the winning motives of his grace, fills me with grief and shame too deep for words to express.

O God! must I thus live and be the prey of my own evil passions, and finally be lost forever? O! I cannot endure the thought. From the lowest depths of sin and degradation I cry unto thee. Though sinful and vile as I am, I still cannot but aspire to heaven —I cannot but aspire to the attainment of perfection in holiness, and to the attainment of the rest of the saints. O Saviour! spurn me not from thy presence, though I have wounded thee by my foolishness, and grieved the Holy Spirit by my sins. "Cast me not from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me," O Father; but restore me, I beseech thee, to thy wonted favor—to the favor which thou bearest to thine anointed. Deliver me from evil. Deliver me from the evil one, and suffer not Satan to overwhelm me with his temptations. "Restore to me the joys of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit; then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee;" for, although I have degraded myself, thy glory and thy cause is still my delight. I long to be delivered from sin and shame, and to behold the glory of the Redeemer, and to enter into the joys of heaven.

Thou knowest, O God! the wounds of my spirit which have been inflicted by sin. Thou knowest that I abhor myself for the baseness of which I am guilty—that I shudder in view of my sins and my sinfulness. Thou knowest, O God! my sorrow and my repentance for the sins which have brought me into my present situation. I have no excuse to offer. I am guilty in thy sight; and yet, my imploring eyes turn to thee. Thou art acquainted with my desire and my plea before thee, though words are inadequate to express them; and yet I feel, that my desires and my repentance cannot claim thy favor. I am conscious, that in me there dwelleth no good thing. I feel utterly empty of all grounds or reasons why thou shouldst regard me with favor, and yet I feel confident, that thou wilt receive me in the name of Him who is

worthy to receive all honor and praise, and who ever liveth to make intercession. I feel impelled, O Lord, by the necessities of my immortal nature, and by the beauty and suitableness of the Redeemer, and, I hope and trust, also by the promptings of thy good Spirit, to cast myself at the mercy-seat, and to cling to the horns of that altar, which has been erected wherever thou hast recorded thy name, and wherever thou hearest prayer.

Hear me, therefore, in these my petitions, not for any worthiness or merit in me, but alone for thy mercy and truth's sake. Amen.

CHAPTER XXI.

SOME SUGGESTIONS PREPARATORY TO COMMUNION IN THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"*Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.*" 1 Cor. 13 : 5.

It is a wise and merciful provision of our heavenly Father, that, amidst the temptations and the failures to which we are subject, and the trials and anxieties which come over us in our Christian life, there has been set apart a season of communion, when we can leave, as it were, the cares of the world and our struggles with sin behind, and enter into the house of God, to engage in that feast of delight and love—the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The Christian is commanded by the Lord in his word, and required by the Church to partake of this feast. No excuse, offered on the ground of his unfitness, or of the unfitness of others in the congregation to partake of it, can absolve him from his obligations. If he is fit to be a church-member, he is qualified and required to come to this sacrament. It is so closely connected with the Christian life, as a means of our sanctification, that, if any one lives in the habitual neglect of it, he ought not to call himself a Christian.

But the same command which requires the observance of the Lord's Supper, requires also the preparation necessary for it. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." I shall, therefore, endeavor, as another communion season approaches, to assist the church-member in a self-examination by way of giving some preparatory suggestions.

The object to be kept in view in the Lord's Supper, is, its general design and nature. It is designed and adapted to give you a foretaste of heaven—of heavenly joys, heavenly purity, and heavenly wisdom. It is designed and adapted to bring to your remembrance, in a peculiarly living and real way, what Christ was, and is, and is to be to you. One immediate end to be attained in the use of this sacrament, is, to unite you more and more to the glorified body of Christ which is in heaven. This is a mystical union, which subsists between Christ and his members. Paul calls it a mystery. But it is nevertheless a union with Christ's body in a real and living way; not that that body is anywhere but in heaven, but that the mediatorial life of Christ, comprehending both his divinity and humanity, or as it is expressed in the Catechism, his majesty, grace and Spirit, descends from heaven to the earth, and is present and living and active in the Church, and in the persons of believers.

If you are a Christian, you are united to Christ's body as the branch is united to the vine. You are born again—made a new creature in him. He is a Saviour to you by dwelling in you and you in him. This indwelling of the Saviour constitutes your spiritual life—the life of God in the soul. This is a great mystery; but the fact is plain, and the design is plain. Now it is the nature and design of this life, that it should grow, that it should become more manifest, that you, who are the subject of it, should become more and more like your Saviour in your thoughts, words, feelings and actions. And this again—namely, the effect of this life—is designed to be a means of carrying forward the cause of religion, the cause of Christ in the world, by attracting others to come within the circle of divine influence and yield themselves to the power of this life. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven."

This living light of the Christian should, like God's grace, "to the end, stronger and brighter shine." If you are truly a Christian, the probability is, that you will persevere to the end of your life and be finally saved. There are strong promises in the sacred Scriptures to this effect. Christ himself said that none should, or could pluck his believing followers out of his hands. And Paul asks the question: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ," &c., and then afterwards declares, that nothing shall separate believers from "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." And considering the omnipotence of God, we would infer, that it is almost, if not entirely, morally certain, that believers will finally all be saved.

Yet, on the other hand, it is not entirely certain, that, for some unfaithfulness of their own, he may not leave them to themselves. And considering their own power, if left to themselves, there is at least great danger of their falling away and being lost. At all events, no one is sure of being saved finally, unless he be a Christian. Taking it for granted, therefore, that there is at least a high degree of probability, that such will be finally saved, no one is assured of it, unless he is assured that he is a Christian. Moreover, no one is certain that he is truly a Christian, unless he shows the fruits of a Christian life; unless he loves God; unless he loves and prefers Christ as his Saviour and obeys his commands, by performing Christian duties; unless he overcomes sin and resists temptations, leading a virtuous and pious life, increasing in holiness. Thus you, dear Christian reader, whom I am addressing, are not certain that you are what you profess to be, unless you persevere in "every good word and work."

As you desire comfort in your own soul, therefore, you should "grow in grace and in the knowledge of God." As you desire a comfortable assurance, that you will be finally

saved, you should be diligent and active in doing good. Your only, or chief comfort in life and in death, is, that you belong, not to yourself, but to your faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. But you cannot belong to Christ, if you live in habitual sin and carelessness. The Christian life is its own highest evidence. The Holy Ghost works an assured confidence in the heart, by leading you to the possession of the indwelling Christ, as the ever-living Redeemer, who works in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. "But if ye have not the Spirit of Christ ye are none of his"—you cannot overcome sin. "This is the victory that overcometh the world," says the apostle, "even our faith." Faith is life; it is the most comprehensive and living act of the soul, and is produced by the Holy Spirit and unites to Christ. Hence we should pray, "Lord increase our faith." We should pray for the Holy Spirit who unites us to Christ, and takes the things of Christ and shows them to us. The Holy Spirit works through the means of grace. These are designed to increase our faith, our confidence, and our inward life; to bring us nearer to Christ, and Christ nearer to us, so as to bring his grace to bear on our hearts—that his life may be strengthened in us—that we may be dead to the world and alive unto God through Jesus Christ. This is especially the design of the Lord's Supper. It is intended to give us power to overcome sin—to purify our souls from pollution—to advance our sanctification, so that we may let our "light shine before men," &c. This the Corinthians, to whom Paul wrote and gave directions to examine themselves, had forgotten. They celebrated the Lord's Supper like a common feast, or heathen festival—to satisfy their carnal appetites, and to obtain carnal pleasure by becoming intoxicated. They did not discern the Lord's body. They did not discern the nature and design of the sacrament, which was to unite them, more and more, mys-

tically, with his glorified body, in order that their minds and their bodies might become more and more sanctified to his service. On account of the unworthy manner in which they partook of the sacrament, "many were weak and sickly among them;" and this both physically and spiritually. They were guilty of intemperate habits, and immoral practices. They even retained in their communion an incestuous person. "After such excesses many might be weak and sickly among them; and many might sleep, i. e. die; for continual experience shows us, that many fall victims to their own intemperance. They might have 'provoked God to plague them with divers diseases, and sundry kinds of death.'"

The next thing necessary for a proper partaking of the Lord's Supper, is, a knowledge—a consciousness of sin and of the need of redemption. And how can you have a knowledge of your sins without self-examination? Here then, we see the use of assembling together previous to communion, in order to prepare ourselves to partake of the sacrament in a profitable manner. The promise is, "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you," &c. But you cannot seek grace, if you do not feel the need of it; and you cannot feel the need of it, unless you think,—unless you meditate—and unless you bring to your remembrance your need of forgiveness and sanctification. You cannot feed on the glorified body of Christ, "the hidden manna," "the bread that cometh down from heaven," if you do not "hunger and thirst after righteousness." You cannot be "filled with all the fulness of God," if you do not feel your own emptiness. You cannot see the preciousness of Christ on the cross, if you do not feel your sinfulness and your need of a righteousness better than your own. You cannot be strengthened from on high, if you do not feel your own weakness.

Examine yourself, therefore, seriously and honestly, as in the light of God's countenance. And to assist you, I would observe, that your examination should be performed,

1. With deliberation. Deliberation is thoughtfulness and caution. You should have your thoughts about you, when you engage in the examination of yourself. You should have your eyes open to the truth before you. You should give yourself entirely to the business in hand. Deliberation is the opposite of carelessness and thoughtlessness. If you are careless and thoughtless in this business, you will fail of accomplishing the object in view. You should call your thoughts in from every worldly care and look back upon your past life, and see wherein you have come short of the divine approbation, wherein you have failed to do your duty, and wherein you have gone beyond the line marked out for you and the sphere within which you were to confine yourself. You should look forward and consider what the Church expects of you. Many "witnesses" behold you and are interested in your progress. You should look forward and consider what the Lord expects and demands of you. He expects every man to do his duty. You should look forward, and consider that you must meet God at the marriage supper of the Lamb; that you must have on the wedding garment; that you must have his mark on your forehead; and that you cannot have his mark on your forehead, unless you have his Spirit in your heart, his heavenly reward in your eye, and his example in your life—unless you have that faith which works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world.

You should look around and see the dangers to which you are exposed, and the enemies you have to combat. You are in danger of being drawn away by worldly things, and of being too much attached to material and temporal things. These are apt to engage too much of your attention. Some

are in danger of loving riches inordinately, and we are told the "love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith." Some are in danger of inordinate sexual affection, and we are told that "no whoremonger shall inherit eternal life." Some are in danger of loving intoxicating drinks too much, and we are told that "no drunkard shall inherit eternal life." Some are in danger of loving sinful amusements and sports, and we are told that revelry and banquetings are classed with "lasciviousness and drunkenness and idolatry, for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." Some are in danger of covetousness—an insatiable lust and hankering after more than is necessary for their natural wants, and we are told that "covetousness is idolatry." Some are in danger of falling into the sin of foolish talking and jesting—frivolous conversation and idle words, and we are told that this is not convenient. It is falling below the proper standard, and showing a want of self-respect. It is utterly improper and highly unbecoming a person professing Christ. "Love not the world, nor the things of the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him," says the Saviour. You are in danger, in all these ways, of departing from "the living God" and going after idols.

Again, you are in danger of being led into sin by wicked men. Some men take delight in tempting Christians and leading them off from duty and from God, into evil company and evil ways. They feel condemned both by the word of God and the example of Christians. They feel uncomfortable, because their own consciences accuse them of wrong, and if they can but get Christians to act as they act, they feel excused. If they can get church-members to commit sin, they rejoice and say, Why! they are no better than we ourselves are. But we are told not to "keep company with

ungodly men." We should not follow them in their ways, either by precept or example. When they entice, rather say, "My soul, come not thou into their secret, and to their assembly let not mine honor be united."

You should feel, that there is a vast difference between you and the world; that, although you have many faults and imperfections, you have different principles, a different standard of duty, and different motives to actuate you; and withal, that you have Christ dwelling in your heart by faith —dwelling in you, together with the Holy Spirit and the Father, as your life. In all situations, and in every place, and every company, you should feel as if you were a Christian, and act accordingly. Whilst you "become all things to all men," conforming to the habits and customs of that society in which you are placed, so far as prudence may dictate, you should not become a time-server, and compromise the essential truths and principles of your profession. Whilst you cover, even errors, with the mantle of charity, you should still pronounce them errors; and where the honor and glory of God are concerned, be firm in the maintenance of your principles.

You should be a witness, as well as a light, against the errors and corruptions of the world, being no partakers in the works of darkness, but rather reproving them. Rather die a martyr to the truth of Jesus, than approve sin, and dishonor the God who made and redeemed you. Like the young lad, in one of our cities, who suffered death by drowning from his thoughtless companions, rather than go with them to steal fruit from a garden, on the Sabbath day, be unyielding—let God be true and every man a liar.

Again, you should remember your enemy, the devil, who goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He oftentimes puts it into your head to do evil. He suggests to you, that you may promise yourself happiness in

sin; but he will lead you to bondage. He has the power to suggest evil thoughts—those demons of the mind, which are so annoying to the believer. This makes him a most terrible enemy. He enters the very citadel of our strength—our minds, and, in some mysterious way, influences our thoughts. Well may you watch against his wiles, and pray to be delivered.

Again, your heart also is apt to lead you astray; for when you would do good, evil is present with you. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Your heart sometimes feels a strong inclination to sin, and because it feels thus—because you have such a strong, and almost irresistible inward inclination to sin, you are apt to excuse yourself and think it is not wrong to do that which is forbidden. Deliberation in examing your heart, however, will reveal to you the fact, that it is your enemy. Well may you pray to God not to leave you, but to deliver you from yourself. You have enemies without and within. You should, therefore, arouse your soul to the conflict, and entering into the battle of faith with a deliberate aim, say:

> "Awake my soul, lift up thine eyes,
> See where thy foes against thee rise."

2. This examination should be performed impartially. You should desire to know the worst of your case and acknowledge it. Satan and your heart would say, "Never mind, you are not so bad as you may think yourself to be; you are in no danger of losing your soul; you are in no danger of falling into fatal snares and bringing reproach on your profession." But God says: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

Some persons will say, "It is no matter whether you keep the Sabbath holy—no matter whether you read the

Bible, &c.—no matter whether you go to church—no matter whether you partake of the sacrament—no matter whether you set a good example or not. Do these things when it is convenient, and when you feel like it, and in such a manner as you feel like doing them. There is no use to be so strict. The world was made to be enjoyed. Be a good citizen. Do as well as you can for yourself and your fellowmen. This is all that is necessary." But they are false advisers. "They heal the hurt of the daughter of the people slightly, saying, peace, peace, where there is no peace." To such you should say, "Get thee behind me, Satan," &c.

3. This examination should be performed diligently. You should be in earnest, and do with your might "what your hand finds to do" in this business. You should bend the energies of your mind to this duty, and not confer with your feelings and inclinations, if they are opposed to it. If your heart is backward, you should chide it on to the duty.

4. This examination should be performed wisely. Wisdom is the adaptation of means to ends. If you are wise, you will attend to this duty for the purpose of obtaining a benefit, and in such a way as to secure it. You should consider the future; and if you would not be "condemned with the world" at the judgment day, you should condemn yourself now—you should judge and scrutinize yourself impartially now.

5. Finally, this examination should be performed with a sincere desire of amendment. If you have not a sincere desire to amend your life, the Lord's Supper will profit you nothing. God is not the minister of sin. He is the author of salvation; and that salvation is designed to free you from sin, to make you happy; to honor his grace, and to make you a channel by which to convey it to others. "But if the light which is in you," or ought to be in you, "be darkness, how great is that darkness." If you merely

profess to be a disciple of Christ, without having *his* inward light to dissipate the darkness, how great will be your darkness? Christ says: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

These are some of the thoughts, which I would suggest to you, as you are about to approach the table of the Lord. And be assured, if you will follow these directions faithfully, you will have cause to thank God in eternity for "the word of his grace." Let Saturday afternoon, previous to communion, be appropriated as much as possible to meditation and prayer. I have found this course profitable in my own case, and doubtless it has been so in that of others. I, therefore, recommend it to you.

A PRAYER AND CONFESSION FOR ONE WHO IS DESIROUS OF CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER IN A PROPER MANNER.

O Lord God! when I reflect on my past life, I am filled with humility and gratitude. Not only previous to the last communion season, when I paid my vows to thee in the sacrament of the holy supper; but since that time, I have been guilty of many grievous sins. Alas! I have publicly transgressed thy commandments. I have committed the awful sin of profaning thy name—desecrating thy holy Sabbath—dishonoring and grieving my parents—injuring, and thus virtually killing my neighbor—defiling myself, by indulging in immoral practices—stealing, by taking from my neighbor that which was not properly my own—bearing false witness against, and slandering my neighbor—and coveting my neighbor's possessions, and giving evidence of an insatiable avarice, in various ways by words and deeds. Thus, O Lord! much of my professing of thy name, which should have been a light before the world, has been darkness.

"And not only with gross outward transgressions, have I grievously and in manifold ways sinned against thee, but much more

with inward natural blindness, unbelief, doubts, despondency, impatience, pride, evil covetousness, secret envy, hatred, malice, and other sinful affections—thou my Lord and God well knowest, and, I, alas! cannot deeply enough deplore." Yet, nothwithstanding all this, thou hast borne with me, and mercifully offerest me pardon on the condition of faith and repentance, of which thou hast given assurance, in that thou hast raised Jesus from the dead, and hast given him power to show living evidence of his presence in the Church, by the power of his majesty, grace and Spirit, by means of his word and sacraments: in that thou hast given him power to manifest his glory in the sanctuary below, as well as in the sanctuary above. I have seen his glory in the sanctuary, and I am moved with gratitude, O Lord! in contemplating thy goodness and mercy in the past history of my life, and in the abundant "provision of thy house," for my comfort and salvation.

O, may I enter into the gates of thy house on the morrow, with praise, and into thy courts with thanksgiving and joyfully partake of the living passover—the memorial of the martyr-lamb, and with my daily life may I serve thee, and with my latest breath may I praise thee, and in eternity own, and be owned by thee the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN SECRET—IN THE CLOSET AND PRIVATE LIFE.

> "The private acts, the secret walks of men,
> If noble, far the noblest of their lives."

It is comparatively easy to make a public profession of religion, and to obtain a creditable character as a church-member, so far as that may be necessarv to entitle you to all the privileges of a church-member, according to the requirements which exist in most congregations. It is not so easy, however, to obtain those sentiments and feelings—that secret life of the mind and the will, which will accompany you in public duties, controling your motives and actions according to the principles of the gospel, and not leave you when you are alone and retired from the world. It is very well known, that a person may pass through the outward forms of reception into the Church, without having his heart touched, in such a manner as to have his soul changed into the mould of Christianity, so that his will and his affections are firmly fixed for God.

I shall never forget the case of a young man, who had been received into the Church, after a course of preparation, by instruction in the catechism, and examination by the pastor and consistory, but who did not perform his duty afterwards, and seemed to have no knowledge of earnest and experimental religion. When he was spoken to with regard to his condition, and his prospects, his duty and his destiny, he remarked: "If I am not doing right, and if I will finally be lost, I may thank Mr. ———, his his pastor, for it." In his case, either his pastor must have

forgotten to be faithful, or the young man did not understand him, and neglected to pray in secret for a blessing on his soul.

The believer's religious life, so far as it consists in his own agency, in cultivating the Christian graces, the Christian spirit, and Christian principles, should commence in the closet, the chamber of meditation and devotion. Scripture injunctions would lead us to this opinion. The Saviour says, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward the openly." Rather commence the cultivation of a religious character in secret first, and that by cultivating the heart—the inward man, with correct principles and proper motives, motives of love to the general cause, the glory of God, and not like the hypocrites and self-deceivers, who prayed in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets only to be seen of men. Thus, when the secret springs of action are right, your light will shine in public in all necessary respects, and your Father will reward you openly.

Those church-members who have been most powerful in doing good, were those who waited in secret on their God. It was there, they received strength, such as was more than human, and made them, though weak in themselves, like Moses, powerful instruments in the hand of God for the promulgation of his name. It was there they moved the arm which moves the world. The most useful rivers, those which contribute most to the comfort and convenience of mankind, are such as commence their course in some secret nook, unnoticed by men, and flow forth until they mingle their waters with larger streams, and finally discharge themselves into the broad ocean. The humble rivulet is the beginning of a mighty river, whose fishing eddies furnish the

tables of the poor with meat, and on whose broad bosom vessels float, with precious burdens for distant cities, carrying the blessings of commerce and civilization.

The laws of the human mind also require its religious exercises to begin in retirement and solitude. True moral or mental worth is always modest. It comes into public view by degrees, and according to the laws of its development, and the occasions which should call it forth. For a professor of religion, young in years, and young in experience, to engage in public prayer, and other exercises in prayer meetings, without first praying in secret, is both unnatural and improper. It will be very likely to result in injury to his religious nature, filling him with vanity and pride, instead of humility; or else, in case of failure, leading him to despair and to make shipwreck of faith entirely.

The writer has seen these results in the cases of persons, who were his intimate acquaintances. Two young persons, he knew, in whose history and experience, the strongest contrast was visible, going to illustrate the correctness of the statement just made. The one attended catechetical instruction, and in accordance with the advice and suggestion of his pastor, he prayed daily in secret, lifting up his voice, with his hands, to his Father in heaven. During the progress of these meetings of inquiry into the doctrines and duties of Christianity, together with his meditations and prayers thereon, and especially during the communion season, he realized a blessing to his soul, which enabled him to rejoice greatly in God his Saviour, and to love him with a supreme and consecrating affection. It is now a little over fourteen years since he was introduced by confirmation, to the rights and privileges of the Church, and he is still firmly settled in "the faith once delivered to the saints."

The other, who was his intimate acquaintance, would not attend the catechetical lectures, excusing himself by saying,

it was no good way to become religious, regarding it as a formal and foolish custom. In the course of time, a revival and protracted meeting commenced in the town, in a Church where persons were received after a change of heart, as they supposed, but in which they were mistaken sometimes,—as is the case in all Churches in receiving members,—and where they were received as seekers after a change of heart, as it may be obtained in connection with the use of such means as the promiscuous instruction, which is given at the anxious bench, in the class meeting, and in the congregational meeting, or otherwise, affords. Accordingly, this young man, being attracted and moved thereto, united with this Church, and immediately gave *that kind* of public expression to his joy, which was customary there. He next gave his experience in the class meeting in a flaming manner; and then engaged in public prayer; and soon also, became the leader of class meetings, and prayer meetings. He never prayed in secret, however. The consequence was, after a year or so of church-membership, he became offended and withdrew, and subsequently became a wretchedly wicked man, to whom there seemed nothing left, but a fearful looking for of judgment. "Ah!" exclaimed he to his friend, after he saw his folly, and the difficulties in which he was involved in his church-relationship, the cause of which he did not exactly know—"If I had only gone with you to catechise."

Another person, a young man, who attended catechetical exercises with the one above alluded to, neglected secret prayer, reading and study, and when he attempted to pray in public, he failed, and became discouraged, and finally grew careless and irreligious altogether. Thus it often happens. Young converts, the tender plants in Zion, if brought forth to exhibit themselves in too public a way, are blighted, wilted and scorched, like young and tender

flowers before the burning heat of the mid-day sun; whereas, if they were kept in a more moderate spiritual temperature, and prepared by cultivation—yes, *cultivation*, in connection with a true change of heart, they would become trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord.

We might go on indefinitely to multiply reasons and examples, showing the benefits of private prayer and meditation; but we will simply present in addition, the case of a young man, of which the writer heard or read somewhere. The account, as near as he can recollect, is as follows:

The pious father of perhaps an only son, on his deathbed, requested his son to come to his bed side, and told him that now, as he was about to leave him forever, as an expression of his parental love, he intended to make him heir of his estate. He had, however, a request to make, namely, that he would, after his death, shut himself up in his chamber one half hour of each day. He wished him now solemnly to promise to perform this thing, as an expression of his filial love, and as a condition of inheriting his estate. The son assented, and accordingly, after the sad rites of his father's burial were performed, and his countenance was forever hid from his eyes, he retired daily into his chamber, wondering at first, why he was required to do so; but, left thus to the reflections of his own mind, he soon perceived the design, and was subsequently by prayer and meditation, brought to commit himself fully to his Redeemer.

Presuming, that you are convinced of the importance of secret prayer, as well as of prayer in general, I will endeavor to assist you with some suggestions on the general subject, and furnish you with some forms of prayer for private use. I furnish these forms, not because I think it necessary for you to confine yourself to forms at all times and in all particulars. There are some things which may always be included in prayers; and indeed they are the essentials

of Christian prayer. With these, however, there may and should be connected a variety according to the necessities of the Christian life, in its course of development in the world.

Prayer should be studied and practiced; and for this purpose, if for no other, forms are useful. In this department of Christian duty, as in every thing else, "practice makes perfect." In the performance of this duty, the most important requisite is, the spirit of prayer. But it is also important, that you understand in what this consists.

The first element of a spirit of prayer is a tender conscience, or in other words, a lively faith in God, as a real being, and as the rewarder of all who diligently seek him. A lively faith always, and in the first place, as it is active in prayer, includes the idea of dependence, and of rewards and punishments. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen"—not seen with the natural eye, and the mere understanding. In the exercise of prayer, the believing suppliant enters into the presence of God with a sense of the reality of the existence and everywhere present power of God. He feels that he stands in the new heavens and new earth; and is as certain of the existence of God, and of his ability to answer his promises to prayer, as he is certain of the existence of the solid earth on which he stands. This faith connects itself with the sense of dependence on a higher power, and of danger not only in respect to the body, but also, and especially in respect to the soul. In other words, it connects itself with the consciousness of physical dependence on a higher power, and with conscience, or a sense of spiritual dependence and accountability. Conscience condemns and urges faith to go in supplication to Him who alone can pardon, and from whom comes every good and perfect gift.

The next element, in which a spirit of prayer consists, is

the understanding. When the soul moves toward God in the exercise of devotion, faith also affects the understanding. The understanding cannot produce faith; but faith can illuminate the understanding. When the Spirit of God begets faith in the soul, there is a reciprocal influence between faith and the understanding. Faith enlightens the understanding, and the understanding, as it is informed, strengthens faith. The better the mind understands the attributes and revelations of God, and the more it is exercised in looking at the dangers which surround the soul, the more will it stimulate prayer. The better it understands the duties incumbent on the believer, the stronger will be the faith.

To use a form of prayer, therefore, without faith being in lively exercise, and without the mind being directed in thinking of the glory of God, and the particular wants which the occasion, and the circumstances of him who prays and those for whom he prays, suggest, is a vain repetition. I would prefer a petition in one's own words, suggested by a sense of besetting sins, and particular daily wants, together with a lively faith in the essential doctrines and facts of the gospel, and a knowledge of the nature and existence of the kingdom of God, to even that excellent and inspired form, the Lord's prayer itself, without the spirit of prayer. In using the Lord's prayer, as well as other forms, it is necessary to enter into the spirit which dictated it. It is necessary to have a knowledge of the comprehensive scope of these petitions, and of their application to our particular cases and necessities. And hence, in reference to the Lord's prayer, it is so very useful to study it, as it is explained in the catechism.

The mere gazing at a prayer-book, and going over the words of a prayer; or, which is worse, gaping at images with a prayer-book in the hand, will be a useless exercise. It is but little more than "bodily exercise," into which the

soul does not enter with living consciouness, and to which it does not yield itself with the free activity of its own faculties. Extemporaneous prayer, without its proper spirit, is liable to the same objection.

If you are not prejudiced against forms, you can use them with as much benefit as extempore prayers of your own. There is, perhaps, this difference, that a well composed form is more likely to be in accordance with the divine will. There is this objection, however, to the constant repetition of the same forms in every particular, that it does not admit of that variety which is the necessary accompaniment of life and activity. There is a liability to fall into formalism, or "bodily exercise." Still, he who has the spirit of prayer, if he is not prejudiced, will not object to the occasional use of forms, or to the use of forms generally, with occasional extempore prayers. Whilst it is highly desirable, that much of your prayers, especially in secret, should be extemporaneous, yet there are certain parts in prayer, and a symmetry of these parts in good forms of prayer, which you would do well to study, in order that you may pray with the spirit and with the understanding.

Prayer has been divided into the following parts, namely: Adoration; Confession; Petition; Supplication; Thanksgiving; Intercession.

It is not necessary to use these parts in the order in which they stand, nor to include the whole of them in every prayer. We should commence with and dwell chiefly upon that which the occasion and circumstances most readily suggest. Your most urgent wants, if the mind is not kept in restraint, will bring such petitions to your memory as are required. Whilst you exercise due reverence, you should come with the utmost confidence to the divine and good being, your heavenly Father, and unbosom your whole heart before him. Come boldly to a throne of grace, that you may ob-

tain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. The study of the Scriptures, particularly the Psalms and Epistles, and the study of the hymn book, will afford you thoughts, ideas, and expressions for extempore prayer.

One thing it would be well to bear in mind also, namely, that the memory should be stored, not only with facts, but with their relation to each other, and with their use and bearing on the general interests of religion, and your special wants and blessings. In other words, the mind should, in prayer, move in the way of argument and reason, in order that it may become the more sensibly affected with its wants. The sight of the eye should affect the heart, in order that the judgment may be convinced and the soul become more earnest in its petitions and thanksgivings. And lest you should be discouraged, in view of the imperfections of your performances in this duty, I will take the liberty of quoting from the writings of that esteemed authoress, Hannah Moore.

"We are often deceived as to the principle and the effect of our prayers. When from some external cause the heart is glad, the spirits light, the thoughts reasonable, the tongue voluble, a kind of spontaneous eloquence, is the result; with this we are pleased, and this ready flow we are ready to impose on ourselves for piety.

On the other hand, when the mind is dejected, the animal spirits low, the thoughts confused; when apposite words do not readily present themselves, we are apt to accuse our hearts of want of fervor, to lament our weakness, and to mourn that, because we have no pleasure in praying, our prayers have, therefore, not ascended to the throne of mercy. In both cases, we are apt to judge ourselves unfairly. These unready accents, these faltering praises, these ill expressed petitions may find more acceptance than the florid talk with which we were so well satisfied: the latter consisted, it may

be, of shining thoughts floating on the fancy, eloquent words dwelling only on the lips; the former was the sighing of a contrite heart, abased by the feeling of its own unworthiness, and awed by the perfections of a holy and heart-searching God. The heart is dissatisfied with its own dull and tasteless repetitions, which, with all their imperfections, infinite goodness may, perhaps, hear with favor. We may not only be elated with the fluency, but even with the fervency of our prayers. Vanity may grow out of the very fact of renouncing it, and we may begin to feel proud at having humbled ourselves so eloquently."

There is, however a strain and spirit of prayer distinct from either of the above. It consists in an entire confidence, that God, through, and for the sake of Christ, will grant you the things you ask for and need; such a confidence as you would have in a friend whom you saw before you, and who was abundantly able and willing to favor you. It is not merely an imagination, but an assurance of reconciliation through Christ, so that every doubt is taken from the mind. "He knows," as the apostle expresses it, "that he has the petitions he desired of God." He implicitly trusts, that, while he speaks, God will hear. "This is the perfection of prayer."

AN INTRODUCTORY MEDITATION ON PRAYER, BY BISHOP WILSON.

How good is God! who will not only give us what we pray for, but will reward us for going to him, and laying our wants before him.

May I always present myself before God, with a firm hope in his promises and mercy;—with great reverence to his infinite majesty;—and with a full purpose of keeping God's commandments.

May the thoughts of eternity quicken my devotions; my wants make me earnest; my backslidings make me persevere; and may I never willfully give way to any distracting thoughts.

May I wait with patience, and leave it to thee, my God and Father, *how* and *when* to grant my petitions.

He that has learned to pray as he ought, has got the *secret* of an holy life.

It is of greater advantage to us than we imagine, that God does not grant our petitions immediately. We learn by *that*, that whereunto we have already attained, *it was the gift of God.*

The best way to prevent wandering in prayer is not to let the mind wander too much at other times; but to have God always in our minds in the whole course of our lives. The end of prayer is not to inform God, but to give a man a sight of his own misery; to raise his soul towards heaven; and to put him in mind, that there is his Father and his inheritance.

A Prayer for Sunday Morning.

[Book of Private Devotion.]

O Lord, I desire to begin the day and the week with thee. Let a solemn sense of thy presence be upon my mind; and while I offer my supplications, in the name of my only Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, comfort my heart by the assurance that thou art nigh unto all them that call upon thee, even all such as call upon thee faithfully.

I acknowledge before thee, O Lord, how unworthy I am to be numbered with thy children; for I have sinned against thee, and thy wrath might justly have consumed me in a moment, and have sent me down to hell;—but thou hast had mercy on me, and hast made known unto me by thy word, how I may be saved.

I thank thee, O Lord, for the opportunities which I am invited to enjoy this day, of hearing those blessed truths, the knowledge of which is essential to the salvation of my soul. Oh! give me grace diligently to attend to thy word. Enable me to understand it, and make me anxious to improve by it, that the sermons which I hear may not rise up against me at the great day.

Bless, O gracious God, the ministers of thy gospel, especially my own, who show unto us the way of salvation. Do thou teach them that they may be able to teach us. O Lord, may thy word this day awaken my conscience, that I may see more evil in the nature of sin, more danger from the guilt of it, and be more earnest to secure an interest in Christ, the only Saviour.

I beseech thee, O Lord, to keep me this day from all worldly thoughts and words; and may thy Spirit suggest such things to my mind as are suitable to this holy part of my time. Oh, may I keep thy Sabbath in a becoming manner, and love it as the best day of the seven, because it is a season dedicated to thy service! Preserve me whilst in thy house, from a stupid and wandering frame; strengthen my memory to retain what I hear, and make this day a time of real benefit to my soul, for which I may have reason to bless thee to all eternity, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

Sunday Evening.

[Book of Private Devotion.]

Almighty and most merciful Father, blessed be thy name, that I have again heard the gospel of thy grace, and the invitations of my Saviour. I adore thee for that word, which is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path, and, above all, for my hope of peace with thee, through the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. O

make the duties of his gospel and the calls of his goodness more dear to my heart, that I may glorify him in my body and in my spirit which are his!

I thank thee, gracious God, for that undeserved compassion which has cast my lot in a Christian land. O make me more anxious to show forth this gratitude, not only with my lips, but in my life, by giving up myself to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all my days. Teach me, by thy Holy Spirit, that all my means of grace and all my opportunities of salvation must be accounted for in the day of judgment; and that to whom much is given, from them will be much required.

Grant, O merciful God, that the Sabbath now closing may promote thy glory and set forward the salvation of men, especially of those with whom I have worshiped; that sinners may be converted, and that Christ may see in them of the travail of his soul and be satisfied!

Have mercy, O God of love, upon my relations, and upon all who are near and dear to me; and give them that godliness which is profitable for all things; which hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

I commend myself to thy merciful protection this night. Be my defence in the hour of sleep and darkness; and if I am permitted to see the light of another day, unite and sanctify my affections to love thee more and serve thee better, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

A Morning Prayer for any day in the week.

Father of mercies and God of all grace, I thank thee, that my eyes are permitted to behold the light of this morning; and that I am in the enjoyment of life and health, and of a safe abode. It is owing to thy mercy, that I have not been consumed; for if thou hadst marked my sins and

entered into judgment with me, I would not have lived to see the beginning of this day. My bed would have been my grave, hadst thou been strict in marking iniquity. I thank thee, O God, that I am yet out of hell; and that I yet enjoy the privilege of praying to and pleading with thee. My sins are many; they are as a mountain which separates me from thee, and as an intolerable weight which sinks me to despair. O that I might now feel the assurance of pardon; and that I might now by faith appropriate to myself the merits of that one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross. O that I might now be enabled to look away from the vile picture presented in myself, to the glorious image of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. O that my soul might appropriate to herself the gracious words, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee."

But, Lord, dare I hope, that so vile a sinner as I, can find acceptance at thy throne of grace? I have sinned so grievously. I have been overcome by temptation again and again. I have fallen into sin, after I had fully resolved not to commit sin again, and after I had earnestly desired to be delivered from sinning. O Lord, I fall before thee a condemned guilty criminal.

Other refuge have I none;
Simply to thy cross I cling.

Unto whom should I go, save unto thee; for thou alone hast the words of eternal life.

And have I named thy name and taken upon myself the profession of a Christian? It is due to sovereign grace that I have been inclined thereto. Help me, therefore, to depart from iniquity. Leave me not to myself, else I will fall. Hold me with thy powerful hand, and I shall be safe. O may I not bring disgrace upon thy cause. May I not withhold from thee the sincere service of my heart. May I not rob thee of thy due. May I not grieve thy Spirit by

my lusts. Help me, O Lord, to slay my sinful affections and lusts. May the love of sinning depart from me, while I contemplate thee and thy ways. May the world be crucified unto me and I unto the world. May I be dead unto the world, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ.

[Extempore petitions may here be offered, suitable to the occasion and circumstances.]

And finally, O God, when I shall have done with the conflicts of earth ; and when my poor frail body shall moulder in the dust, may my spirit be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus ; and in the glorious resurrection may I sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the just made perfect, in the kingdom of heaven above, and the glory shall be thine forever. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

An Evening Prayer for any day in the week.

Almighty and ever-present God, who inhabitest eternity and the praises thereof; and whose presence fills heaven and earth ; and who art God over all, it is in thy sight, that I bow myself in the depths of humility at the close of this day to render thee thanks for the many blessings thou hast bestowed upon me during the day which is past and gone ; and especially for preserving my unprofitable life, and lengthening out my days thus far ; knowing, that, hadst thou dealt justly with me, I would no longer be in the land of the living, but long ere this would have gone the way of all the earth, and perhaps have been found unprepared to meet thee in judgment.

By thy grace, I am what I am, temporally and spiritually. It is in thee I live, and move, and have my being. Under a sense of my dependence and my duty, I beseech thee to pardon whatever thou hast seen amiss in me this day, as well as in all my past life. I beseech thee to give

me a consciousness of the pardon of my sins. Give me an assured confidence, which it is the province of the Holy Spirit to work in my heart, that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin is given, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits.

And may Christ be not only my righteousness, but my sanctification also; for I know, that if Christ dwell not in me, the power of a new life, he cannot be my redeemer; for without him I can do nothing. May I, therefore, have communion with thee through the Holy Spirit, and receive a token for good. May thy love be shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Spirit which is given to believers; and may I, thereby, be more and more united to Christ the living head of the Church.

[Extempore petitions as occasion may prompt.]

And now I commit myself to thy fatherly protection during the silent watches of the night; for thou only makest me to dwell in safety. Yet I am sensible, that the night of death is approaching, and that, sooner or later, I must pay the debt of nature. Help me, therefore, O Lord, to realize, that, whether waking or sleeping, I am thine; and that, if thou shouldst call me this night to leave the body and appear in spirit, before thee, I am thine by everlasting bonds of love; and praises everlasting shall be ascribed to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The following topics may furnish matter for special prayers:

New year's day; birth day; before receiving the sacrament; for repentance; for the assurance of pardon; for faith; for strength to resist temptation; for watchfulness against sin, &c.; for a blessing on reading the Scriptures; for meekness; for spiritualized affections; for holiness; against wandering thoughts in prayer; for a right use of time; for divine guidance; for humility; for the love of

God; for patience under affliction; under spiritual trouble; gratitude to God; before going on a journey; for the spread of the gospel; for resignation to the divine will; in prospect of death.

Ejaculatory prayers, and silent prayers during the occupations of the day, if offered in sincerity, will be answered. When rising in the morning it is well to offer ejaculations like the following:

Lord, lift upon me the light of thy countenance, and give me peace through the blood of the cross.

In the evening:

I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest; for it is thou, Lord, only that makest me to dwell in safety.

Self-examination, daily, and especially before communion, is important.

A Prayer before Self-examination.

[Book of Private Devotion.]

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, who searchest the heart and triest the innermost thoughts, I beseech thee now to assist me in looking into my own heart, and my own life. Feeling and acknowledging that my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, I beseech thee to show me to myself.

Enable me to try myself by the standard of thy holy word, and discover the true state of my soul; give me repentance for my past sins, lively faith in Jesus Christ, the only Saviour from sin, deep humility before thee, and such tempers and dispositions as are meet for those who assemble round the table of our gracious Redeemer. These things I ask for his name's sake. Amen.

In the discharge of this necessary and important duty, the Christian should remember, that every day he lives he

has a God to glorify, 1 Cor. 6 : 20 ; a soul to save, Phil. 2 : 12, 13 ; repentance to seek and perform, Acts 5 : 31 ; Luke 13 : 3 ; a Saviour to believe in and imitate, Acts 16: 31; 1 Peter 2 : 21 ; a body to mortify through the Spirit, Rom. 8 : 13 ; graces and virtues to implore by earnest prayer, Phil. 4 : 6 ; Mark 11: 24 ; sins to weep over and forsake, Luke 7 : 28 ; Prov. 28 : 13 ; mercies and deliverances to remember, Psal. 56 : 12, 13 ; Psal. 103 : 1–4 ; a hell to avoid, Matth. 3 : 7 ; Psal. 9 : 17 ; a Paradise to gain, Rev. 2 : 7–10 ; an eternity to meditate on, Coloss. 3 : 2 ; time to redeem, Ephes. 5 : 16 ; a neighbor to edify, Rom. 15 : 2 ; Luke 22 : 32 ; works of charity to perform, Matth. 25 : 40; a world to fear, and yet to conquer, 2 Cor. 6 : 17 ; 1 John 5 : 4 ; devils to combat, Eph. 6 : 12 ; passions to subdue, 2 Cor. 10 : 5 ; Eph. 4 : 31, 32 ; and, perhaps, death to suffer, Luke 12 : 20 ; and judgment to undergo, 2 Cor. 5 : 5–10. And all these must be met and performed in the grace of Christ, and not in your own strength, which is perfect weakness, 2 Cor. 13 : 10 ; Phil. 4 : 13.

QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

Morning.

1. Have I this morning sought of the Lord his special grace and protection for the day ?

2. Am I going forth in my own strength, or looking simply to God alone to help and deliver ?

3. Am I so sensible of my own weakness as ever to watch and pray ?

4. Am I living by faith in a daily and simple dependence on God ?

5. Do I constantly remember, that I am accountable to God for a right improvement of the talents entrusted to me ?

6. Have I determined to lay myself out this day for the glory of God ?

7. Are all the faculties of my soul engaged to render affectionate, intelligent, sincere, and resolute service?

8. Have I resolved, in the strength of God, to forsake all sins, however dear to me, particularly my besetting sin, whether it be pride, envy, malice, covetousness, impurity, fear of man, or any other sin?

9. Is it my earnest desire to abstain from the very appearance of evil, and to keep myself unspotted from the world?

Evening.

1. Did I this morning make my resolutions to walk closely with God, in dependence on his gracious assistance?

2. Have I this day put up petitions against my besetting sins?

3. What have I committed, and what omitted, to-day?

4. What mercies have I received this day—answers to prayer—deliverance from evil—common or remarkable blessings?

5. What have I done this day for the glory of God or the good of my fellow-creatures; or what opportunities have I neglected of promoting them?

6. Have I been enabled this day willingly to take up my cross?

7. Have I been watching to-day against the first risings of pride and worldly-mindedness? Have I guarded against the appearance of evil?

8. Have I kept up a lively and humble dependence upon the divine influence, in the duties and emergencies of the day?

9. With what success have I encountered the sins to which my circumstances or constitution most incline me?

10. Have I been looking to Jesus as my righteousness, my strength, and my example?

11. How have I improved my time this day? Have I

made any progress in religion? Have I thought of death and judgment? Have I walked with God?

12. Have I this day tried to mortify sin?

13. Have I prayed, and how? Have I read the Scriptures, and how?

GENERAL QUESTIONS.

1. Do I think much and frequently of God, and am I zealous for his glory?

2. Do I enjoy communion with God when I pray to him, or desire this?

3. Do I strive to become like him?

4. Am I actively desiring and seeking the good of all around me, even as I desire my own?

5. Is my love to others like that of Christ to me?

6. Have the miseries of others called forth compassion and efforts to relieve them?

7. Am I seeking the salvation of my fellow-creatures?

8. Is sin hateful to me? Do I loathe it as the worst of all evils?

9. Have I an habitual mourning for sin?

10. Have I deeply felt my corruption and guilt before God?

11. Do I believe, that the Gospel is the appointed and only complete way of salvation?

12. Do I rest on the only hope of forgiveness—redemption through the blood of Christ?

13. Am I so believing in Jesus as to rely upon him as my Saviour?

14. Am I truly grateful to God for his great salvation?

15. Am I evidencing this by a care to please him in all things?

16. Am I humble and lowly in mind, affection, and conversation?

17. Do the sufferings of Christ for sin affect my heart with godly sorrow?

18. Am I patient under crosses, trials, and injuries, and willing to suffer reproach for Christ's sake?

19. Do I quietly submit to God's painful dispensations?

20. Do I hunger and thirst after righteousness?

21. Do I earnestly desire to obtain that righteousness which is through the faith of Christ?

22. Am I laboring to spread the gospel of peace?

23. Do I seek to know God more myself, and to diffuse his knowledge through the world?

24. Have I resigned myself to the will of God, to do and suffer his pleasure?

25. How do I spend my Sabbaths? Do I not, in too many instances, employ these opportunities of mercy in unprofitable and sinful conversation; in doing many unnecessary works; by travelling, visiting, &c., instead of improving them, so as to promote the glory of God and my own spiritual advantage?

RESOLUTIONS.*

1. Resolved, that I *will do whatever* I think to be most to the glory of God and my own good, profit and pleasure, ON THE WHOLE, without any consideration of time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence; to do whatever I think to be my *duty*, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general—whatever difficulties I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavoring to find some *new contrivance* to promote the fore-mentioned things.

*These resolutions are extracted from the life of that admirable Christian, and acute reasoner, President J. Edwards. They seem to have had a powerful influence in forming his character. Of the seventy we select those which are here given.

3. Resolved, *never to* DO, BE *or* SUFFER, any thing in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God ?

4. Resolved, never to lose one moment of *time*, but improve it in the most profitable manner I possibly can ?

5. Resolved, to live with all my might while I do live.*

6. Resolved, never to do any thing, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

7. Resolved, to think much, on all occasions, of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.

8. Resolved, to be endeavoring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.

9. Resolved, never to do any thing out of revenge.

10. Resolved, never to suffer the least motion of anger to irrational beings.

11. Resolved, that I will so live as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

12. Resolved, to live so at all times, as I think it best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of the gospel and another world.

13. Resolved, to maintain a strict temperance in eating and drinking.

14. Resolved, never to do any thing, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way more meanly of him.

15. Resolved, whenever I do any evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause ; and then both care-

* This is the full import of the Latin motto, "Dum vivimus vivamus," which was the motto of Dr. Doddridge's family coat of arms, and which he has thus paraphrased:

Live, while you live, the EPICURE would say,
And seize the pleasures of the present day.
Live, while you live, the sacred PREACHER cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies ;
Lord, in my view, let both united be,
I live in PLEASURE when I live to THEE.

fully endeavor to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the original of it.

16. Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.

17. Resolved, to strive to my utmost every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.

18. Resolved, to be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that Prov. 20: 6, (*a faithful man, who can find?*) may not be partly fulfilled in me.

19. Resolved, always to do what I can towards making, maintaining, and establishing peace, when it can be done without an overbalancing detriment in other respects.

20. Resolved, never to speak in narrations anything but the pure and simple truth.

21. Resolved, never to speak evil of any person, except some particular good call for it.

22. Resolved, to inquire every night as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself; also at the end of every week, month, and year.

23. Resolved, never to speak anything that is ridiculous, or matter of laughter on the Lord's day.

24. Resolved, never to do anything that I so much question the lawfulness of, as that I intend, at the same time to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or no; except I as much question the omission.

25. Resolved, frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism, which I solemnly renewed, when I was received into the communion of the Church, and which I have solemnly ratified this 12th Jan. 1723.

26. Resolved, never to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's.

27. Resolved, constantly, with the utmost niceness and diligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of.

28. Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

29. Resolved, when I fear misfortunes and adversities, to examine whether I have done my duty, and resolve to do it; and let it be just as providence orders it, I will as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty and my sin.

30. Resolved, never to do anything but duty; and then according to Eph. 6: 6–8, do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not unto man; knowing that whatever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

31. Resolved, to exercise myself much in this all my life long, viz: with the greatest openness to declare my ways to God, and to lay open my soul to him; all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance, according to Dr. Manton's twenty-seventh sermon on the 119th Psalm.

32. Resolved, after afflictions, to inquire what am I better for them; what good have I got, and what I might have got by them.

CONFESSION OF SIN AFTER SELF-EXAMINATION.

O Lord God Almighty, the judge of all the earth, keeping covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments, have mercy upon me a miserable sinner, coming back to thee in the name of Jesus Christ. My conscience

accuses me of many transgressions and much disobedience. If in any thing I have not greatly sinned, or have in a measure fulfilled thy will, this was thy work, and to thee alone be the praise. But, O how unfaithful have I been to my engagments, and how often have I transgressed thy law and been disobedient to thy holy will!

I desire especially to confess and to bewail those sins, for which my own heart more particularly condemns me.

And how much of my sinfulness is unknown to myself! But thou art acquainted with all my ways. Oh, cleanse thou me from my secret faults, and all my known transgressions! Wash me through that precious blood which cleanses from all sin. Give me grace to look to Him who was pierced for my sins, and to mourn for them with that godly sorrow which works repentance unto salvation. O, vouchsafe unto me a holy sorrow of heart, a lively faith in Christ and a sure hope of thy mercy through him, that I may, with a pacified conscience, a believing and penitent, and a grateful and thankful spirit, go to partake of the memorials of his death. Hear me for his name's sake. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN THE FAMILY; HIS DUTY TO USE HIS INFLUENCE FOR THE SPIRITUAL GOOD OF HIS FAMILY; FAMILY PRAYER URGED; FORMS OF PRAYER.

"*For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken,*" Gen. 18: 19. "*I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*" Ps. 101: 2.

THE family is a very important sphere, in which the church-member should develop the Christian spirit and Christian principles. His relation to the congregation does not absolve him from exerting a positive religious influence in the family, so far as it is possible for him to do so. His actions, as occasion offers, should be referred to the will of God, as this may be gathered from his word. He should hold the word of God in reverence and respect, and, if necessary, defend it. He should leave the impression as deeply as possible, on the minds of all in his family, that he regulates his conduct by the rules of the gospel, and by "the doctrine according to godliness." He should conduct himself with a "perfect heart," that is, with a genuine heart—a decided heart. He should be a decided Christian character, in order that it may be seen, unmistakably, that he wishes to be a Christian, and to act like a Christian; and that he does not willingly hide his light under a bushel, but wishes it to give light to all who are in the house. Thus

it should be, and thus it often happens that parents are the instruments of the conversion of their children, and that children are the instruments of the conversion of their parents.

There are religious duties, which the church-member—if he be yet a child—so long as he remains in the family circle and afterward also, would do well to consider. The child who honors its father and mother, and obeys them in the Lord, has a security for prosperity in time and in eternity, which, certainly, they who break away from parental restraint do not possess. A parent's curse, though not expressed in form, but still sanctioned by the God of high heaven, will follow that child who despises and rejects the proper influence and counsel of its parents. The judgments of heaven often fall upon such disobedient ones, and they are cut off from the land of the living.

I wish, however, chiefly to speak a few words to the church-member who is a parent. Your relation to the immortal souls of your children is such, that you are greatly responsible for the influence you exert upon them. It is your duty to command them ; to restrain them from whatever is evil, and to direct them to that which is good. But it becomes you seriously to consider the manner, in which this is to be done. Your commands should be just, and reasonable, and conscientious ; or at least as much so, as it is possible for erring mortals to make them; and they should be accompanied with instructions on the reasons and principles of obedience. You should *teach* your child the way in which it should go. Much evil has been done by the arbitrary exercise of parental authority. By the forbidding, overbearing, and tyrannical manner in which some parents have ruled their children, parental authority, in their case, has been frustrated in its design. It is indeed their duty to be firm and unyielding in the exercise of a legitimate

control over their children, and a failure to do so, is as great an error as a misuse of their authority; still there is a happy medium, which they should endeavor to observe. The simple command, without regard to its being right or wrong,—prompted more by passion than by a conscientious regard to justice and the good of the child, and without convincing the judgment and commanding the reason of the child, is productive of harm. The simple command, "Do this," unaccompanied with the recognition of obedience to God and religious influence, if unreasonable and enforced in an unaffectionate manner, will "provoke your children to wrath," and repulse rather than stimulate them to good deeds.

While you command the performance of the temporal and religious duties, you should, at the same time, instil into the minds of your children good principles. They should thus become a law to themselves; otherwise they will be not your children, but your unwilling slaves, performing your commands grudgingly. You should endeavor to implant and develop proper principles, principles of justice, honesty, truth, and Christian obedience in the minds of your children. "Parents should leave to their children a rich inheritance of pious precepts," is a sentiment, which deserves to be written in gold; and although it is but spelling-book authority, it is in entire accordance with the book of inspiration, and is of the utmost importance. The young man who possesses good principles, may expect large success in the world anywhere. He has a patrimony, which is worth more than material wealth,—more than gold and silver. Nothing will compensate for the absence of good principles. No true prosperity will follow any one, save the upright character.

But the true and full interests of your children, however, are higher than this world. The true and full object of this life cannot be obtained, except in connection with the object

and interests of the life to come. They should be taught, therefore, their responsibilities in reference to a future state. They should be religiously educated and trained; brought up under the nurture and admonition of the Lord, with a view to their becoming members of the Church in full connection. They should be instructed in the nature and design of their baptism, and questioned, that is, catechized in reference to the object of faith, the influences of the Holy Spirit, and the dealings of God with their souls. They should thus be prepared to become catechumens under the care of their pastor, and when an invitation is given, they should be directed by the parent to go and attend catechetical lectures. This is the system of the German Reformed Church, and we think it is the most excellent way.*

The reason why our ministers cannot prevail upon persons to attend catechetical instruction, is because parents do not have that control over their children, which they should have; or where they do possess it, they do not exercise it in urging them to attend the catechetical class. In some places the parent church-members are themselves opposed to the practice of catechizing, because they fall in with the prejudices of some of the sects against it. And in some instances, ministers yield to this current of opinion, without any efforts to stop it. The fault of so few attending the solemn convocation for catechizing, lies, in a great measure, at the door of the minister. In this respect, the adage, "Like priest, like people," is fulfilled, as well as in others.

The Church needs a great awakening to a sense of her duty in this respect. Why do you not, if you are a conscientious church-member, employ the authority, which God has

* We would here recommend to the use of parents in catechising their children, the "Palatinate Catechism," or the "Exercises on the Heidelberg Catechism," and especially the "Heidelberg Catechism Simplified," in the case of small children.

given you, in directing your children to use that most excellent means for preparing them to offer spiritual sacrifices, catechizing by the pastor of your Church? Certainly the patriarch Abraham, who combined in himself the character of pastor and parent, would not have objected to such a course; for it was said of him: "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him." For his part, the writer of these lines will ever thank God, that his venerated father, now in the grave, though very imperfect in his own example, gave to him, his son, the friendly advice to attend lectures on the catechism.

But your commands on religious principles, and religious motives, to religious duties, should be accompanied with a good example by yourself. And this example should culminate, or centre in family worship of some kind or other, even if it be no more than asking a blessing at the table. The family altar is the place where the incense of praise and prayer should constantly burn, so that all, who come in contact with that family, may be affected by the light and heat thereof. In proof of the collateral benefits of family prayer, the writer can testify, that his own honored pastor, himself the son of a pastor, received some of his early and most serious religious impressions, by hearing an elder of his father's church, asking a blessing on his daily meal. For his own sake, however, and that of his family, the Christian will not regret, when he comes to die, that he knelt down every day and prayed, though it should have been only the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Indeed, family prayer is a most important mark of a Christian family; and I am inclined to the opinion, that Archbishop Tillotson spoke the sober truth, when he said: "The principal part of family religion is prayer, every morning and evening, and reading some portion of Scripture; and this is so necessary to keep alive a sense of God

and religion in the minds of men, that where it is neglected, I do not see how any family can, in reason, be esteemed a family of Christians, or, indeed have any religion at all."

A synopsis of the Heidelberg Catechism will here be given, as taken from the Palatinate Liturgy; and a few forms of prayer shall conclude the chapter.

What is necessary for man to know in order to be saved?

Three things: First, how great his sins and miseries are. In the next place, how he may be delivered from his misery. Thirdly, how he may thank God for such deliverance.

I. OF THE MISERY OF MAN.

1. *In what does the misery of man consist?*

In his being a poor sinner, and meriting, on account of sin, eternal damnation.

2. *Whence may sin be known?*

Out of the ten commandments of God, which no man can keep, because they require not only an outward, but also an inward perfect obedience of the entire man.

The ten commandments are the following:

I.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord, thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

III.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain.

IV.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V.

Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI.

Thou shalt not kill.

VII.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII.

Thou shalt not steal.

IX.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

3. *How may we know that we are condemned on account of sin?*

From the curse of God threatened against all transgressors of the ten commandments, as it is written: Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law, to do them.

But whence comes this misery, that we are such poor sinners?

From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise.

II. OF MAN'S DELIVERANCE.

5. *How are we delivered from this misery?*

God gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Saviour.

6. *Is there but one God?*

Yes, there is but one only God, yet in three distinct persons, namely, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as the articles of our Christian faith teach.

7. *What are these articles?*

I. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth,

II. And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord:

III. Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary:

IV. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into Hell:

V. The third day he arose from the dead.

VI. He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

VII. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

VIII. I believe in the Holy Ghost.

IX. I believe in the holy Catholic Church: The communion of saints.

X. The forgiveness of sins:

XI. The resurrection of the body;

XII. And the life everlasting, Amen.

8. *Who is Jesus Christ?*

He is the only begotten Son of God, and the Son of Mary, as stated in the above articles; that is He is very God, and very man in one person.

9. *Why had he to be very man?*

That he might suffer death for us.

10. *Why was it necessary for Him to be very God?*

That He might conquer death, and give us eternal life.

11. *From what then hath He delivered us?*

From sin and all the power of the devil, and from eternal death, so that He hath procured for us, on the other hand, righteousness, the Holy Ghost, and eternal life.

12. *How did He procure this redemption?*

By his sufferings, death, and resurrection.

13. *How are we made partakers of his redemption?*

Alone through faith.

14. *What is true faith?*

It is a certain assurance and hearty confidence in the promise of God, that for Christ's sake He will be merciful unto us.

15. *Whence may we derive this assured confidence?*

From the promise of the gospel: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.

16. *Since then we are made partakers of Christ, and of the redemption He procured for us, by faith alone, of what use are the sacraments?*

They serve to strengthen our faith.

17. *How many sacraments are there in the New Testament?*

Two: holy baptism, and the holy supper of the Lord.

18. *What are the words of the institution of holy baptism?*

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.

This promise is also repeated, where the Scriptures call baptism the washing of regeneration and the purging away of sins.

19. *What are the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper?*

"The Lord Jesus, in the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And when he had given thanks he break it, and said, Take eat: this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me," &c. (See 1 Cor. 11: 23–30, and 1 Cor. 10–16.)

III. OF THANKFULNESS.

20. *How may a Christian show his gratitude to God for his salvation?*

By a Christian life, and believing prayer.

21. *How may a Christian life be led?*

By doing good works.

22. *What are good works?*

Such as God has enjoined, and are done in true faith, and to the glory of God.

23. *Why are good works necessary?*

Not that we may thereby be saved, but that thus we may prove our gratitude to God, since he hath enjoined them, and they are an evidence of our faith.

24. *How must we show our gratitude to God by prayer?*

By calling on Him in all times of need, and thanking Him for all his benefits.

25. *But how should we address God in prayer?*

After the manner that our Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into

temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

The Liturgy also contains a selection of Scripture passages applicable to every condition in life; and in introducing them, holds the following language: "The Holy Scriptures not only teach *in general* how we may lead a godly and Christian life, but also direct each one, in every particular station, age, and calling, how to conduct himself in the path upon which God has placed him. The most important passages are, therefore, collected in the following table, that every one may the better know how to conform his conduct to the word of God."

Of Kings and Princes.—Deut. 17 : 19; Ps. 2 : 10, 11.

Of Councils, Officers, Counselors, and Judges.—Ex. 18: 21, 22; 2 Chron. 19 : 6, 7.

Of Subjects.—Rom. 13 : 1–6.

Of Preachers, Elders, and Deacons.—Ezek. 3 : 17–19; Acts 20 : 28; 1 Peter 5 : 1–4; Rom 12; 7–8.

Of Hearers.—Deut. 17 : 10–13; Heb. 13 : 17; Coloss. 3 : 16–17; 1 Tim. 5 : 17.

Of Schoolmasters and Schoolmistresses.—Matth. 18 : 5–7; Mark 9 : 37.

Of Scholars.—Prov. 8 : 10–11, and 12 : 1.

Of Married Persons in general.—Heb. 13 : 4.

Of Husbands.—Eph. 5 : 25; Coloss. 3; 19; 1 Peter 3 : 7.

Of Wives.—Eph. 5 : 22, 23, 24; Coloss. 3 : 18; 1 Peter 3 : 1–6.

Of Parents.—Deut. 6 : 6, 7; Prov. 23 : 13, 14, and 13 : 24, and 19 : 18.

Of Children.—Prov. 1 : 8, 9; Eph. 6 : 1–3.

Of Masters and Mistresses.—Coloss. 4 : 1; Fph. 6 : 9.

Of Servants and Handmaids.—Eph. 6 : 5–8; 1 Peter 2 : 18.

Of the Aged.—Titus 2 : 1–5.

Of the Youth.—1 Peter 5 : 4, 5 ; Ps. 119 : 9 ; Isaiah 3 : 16, 17.

Of the Rich.—1 Tim. 6 : 6, 9, 17, 19.

Of the Poor.—Prov. 28 : 6 ; James 2 : 5.

General Passages.—Matth. 7 : 12 ; John 13 : 34, 35.

FAMILY PRAYERS.

Sunday Morning.

[Rev. William Jay.]

O come, let us worship and fall down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, for He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

Yes, O Lord we are Thine ; and Thee we are bound to serve. We grieve to think how many of our fellow creatures live without Thee in the world ; and confess with shame that other lords have had dominion over us : but henceforth by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name. We hope Thou hast subdued the insensibility and indifference towards thyself, so awfully natural to us, and awakened in us the inquiry, Where is God my Maker, that giveth songs in the night? We hope we are disposed to acknowledge Thee in all our ways ; but we feel our need of the exercises of devotion. We trust we hold communion with Thee every day ; but we find week days to be worldly days; and our allowed intercourse with secular concerns tends to reduce our heavenly impressions, and to make us forgetful of our work and of our rest. We, therefore, bless Thee for the return of a day sacred to our souls and eternity ; a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord ; in which, by waiting upon Thee, our hearts are enlarged, and our strength is renewed ; so that we can mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.

This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. O let our minds be withdrawn from the

world, as well as our bodies. Let our retirement be devout, preserved from vain thoughts and vain words. Let our meditation be sweet. Let our conversation be edifying. Let our reading be pious. Let our hearing be profitable—and on Thee may we wait all the day!

Afford us the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. None can need thy succors more than we. Thou knowest our infirmities—let Thy strength be made perfect in our weakness. Our duties are far above our own power—let Thy grace be sufficient for us. Our dangers are numberless, and we are utterly unable to keep ourselves from falling—hold Thou us up, and we shall be safe. The burdens we feel would press our lives down to the ground—lay underneath us thine everlasting arms. While in the world we have tribulation. In Thee may we have peace; and in the multitude of our thoughts within us, may Thy comforts delight our souls.

Yet, O Lord, we would remember, that gratitude becomes us much more than complaint. Our afflictions have been light, compared with our guilt; and few compared with the sufferings of others. They have all been attended with numberless alleviations; they have all been needful; all founded in a regard to our welfare; all designed to work together for our good. We bless Thee for what is past; and trust Thee for what is future; and cast all our care upon Thee knowing that Thou carest for us.

Thou hast commanded us to pray for all men, so that we are bound by our very devotions, as we have opportunity, to do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith. May we always cherish and display benevolent dispositions towards our dependents; forgiving dispositions towards our enemies; peaceable dispositions towards our neighbors; and candid dispositions towards our fellow Christians. May we be able to say with our Lord and

Saviour: WHOSOEVER shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother; and pray with Paul, Grace be with ALL them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

May the goings of our God and King be seen, this day, in every Christian sanctuary. Go with us to thy house and give testimony to the word of thy grace. May it have free course, and be glorified in the hearts and lives of those who shall hear it May it enlighten the ignorant; awaken the careless; reclaim the wandering, establish the weak; comfort the feeble minded; and make ready a people prepared for the Lord!

Remember those who are this day denied our advantages. Be a little sanctuary to them in the midst of their privations; and let them know that Thou art not confined to temples made with hands. And O forget not those who never enjoyed our privileges; never smiled when a Sabbath appeared; never heard of the name of a Saviour; and let thy way be known on earth, thy saving health among all nations! Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.

Sunday Evening.

[Rev. William Jay.]

Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? May we approach Thee with the humility which is due to Thy greatness, and the hope that becomes Thy goodness. For though Thou art high, yet hast Thou respect unto the lowly; and though continually adored by

thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, yet Thou despisest not the prayer of the destitute, but wilt hear their prayer. Our fathers cried unto Thee, and were delivered. They trusted in Thee and were not confounded. And Thou never saidst to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.

Behold a company of sinners at Thy footstool, earnestly praying to be remembered with the favor Thou bearest unto Thy people, and to be visited with Thy salvation! We would not overlook the blessings of the life that now is. If we have food and raiment, and agreeable connections, and ease and health, and safe abode, we would bless Thee; for we have no claim to these bounties, and our present condition renders them valuable. But they are not our God;

> Give what thou canst, without Thee we are are poor,
> And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.

Thou art the strength of our hearts, and our portion forever. Whom have we in heaven but Thee; and there is none upon earth that we desire beside Thee.

And praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion. We long to be able, with unshaken confidence, to apply the promises of Thy grace to ourselves; and to say, Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. O say to our souls, in language our consciences can understand, I am Thy salvation; and give us a token for good, that we may rejoice in Thee.

Yet, O God, we would not rest satisfied with a conviction of our relation to Thee, while we are regardless of improving it. May we walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. We can never discharge the obligations Thy abundant mercy has laid us under; but we may ever show that we are sensible of them; and that our impressed hearts are asking, *what* shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? While we hear Thee saying,

O do not that abominable thing which I hate, may we be effectually deterred from sin, and induced to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. May Thy love be shed abroad in our hearts, that none of Thy commandments may be grievous. May Thy glory be dear to us; may we inquire after Thy will with impartiality, and conform to it with diligence. Uphold us by Thy free Spirit; and let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord our strength and our redeemer.

Hitherto we have been compelled to exclaim, My leanness, my leanness! We have been no better in religion than a bruised reed or smoking flax. But it is our mercy that Thou dost not despise the day of small things, and our encouragement, that thou givest more grace; that Thou hast promised to perfect that which concerneth us; and commanded us to ask and receive, that our joy may be full.

Thou knowest what is in man, and what is necessary to him. Thou art not only addressing us continually by the voice of creation, and the varying events of Thy providence, but Thou hast given us Thy word and Thine ordinances. We behold our Sabbaths, our eyes see our teachers, and our ears hear the joyful sound of salvation by the cross, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Prophets and righteous men desired to see the things that we see and did not see them, and to hear the things that we hear, and did not hear them. But blessed are our eyes, for they see; and our ears for they hear. Yet we would remember, that our responsibility will be answerable to our talents; that our chief danger results from our greatest privileges; and that our very blessings may be converted into a curse. We would, therefore, fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into Thy rest, any of us should seem to come short of it.

Bless this family. May those of us who are at the head

of it, walk within our house with a perfect heart, and set no wicked thing before our eyes. May we have a testimony in the bosoms of those who have the best opportunities of observing us, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by Thy grace, we have our conversation in the world, and more especially to them-ward. May we conduct ourselves towards those who serve us, as knowing that we have a master in heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with God; and may our servants, in fulfilling the duties of their station, serve the Lord Christ. May we train up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and have the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing them walk in the truth. We ask not great things for them of a worldly nature; only give them health of body, and soundness of mind, and food and raiment convenient and sufficient for them; but O bless them with all spiritual blessings, and number them with Thy saints in glory everlasting. Pity those parents whose hearts are bleeding over children of disobedience; and hear all the pious, whose irreligious relations are forcing them often to exclaim, How shall I endure to see the destruction of my kindred!

Hear the prayers which have been offered this day for our native country, for our rulers, and for the government under which we live. It is a good land which the Lord our God has given us. Thou hast done great things for us whereof we are glad. May we never grow insensible of our privileges, and provoke Thee by our sins to remove them. May they be continued to the latest posterity, and be sanctified to us and our children. As Thou hast given us such a distinguished rank among the nations, may we be for a name and a praise to Thee in the whole earth; and as we are so largely the subjects of thy goodness, may we be the instruments too; and from us may the word of the Lord sound out into every land.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Monday Morning.

[Rev. William Jay, abridged.]

O THOU God of all grace; the Father of mercies; the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble: Why hast Thou revealed thyself in such lovely characters and endearing relations, but to meet our dejections, to remove our fears, and induce us to say, It is good for me to draw nigh unto God!

[Occasional petitions may here be offered on any or all of the following topics:

The purpose for which we come to God, such as pardon of sin, &c.

The manner—in submission to God; method of salvation—through Jesus.

Access by the Spirit—the Holy Comforter, who has actuated the souls of God's people in all ages.

For assistance to make Jesus our chief joy—our repose in distresses of conscience and afflictions of life.

To feel that we are strangers and pilgrims.

While we remain, to be the salt of the earth and light of the world—not ashamed of Jesus, but strong and courageous.

For heavenly teaching, to see divine things in a divine light.]

Accept our united thanksgivings for the preservation and refreshment of the past night; and take us under Thy guiding and guardian care this day; and whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, may we do all to the glory of God, through our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Monday Evening.

[Rev. William Jay, abridged.]

We have heard, that to the Lord our God belong mercies

and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him. Hence we are encouraged to approach Thee. For we are verily guilty, we are deeply guilty. If our depravity has not always broken forth into action, our hearts have been deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and if our transgressions have not been so gross as those of many of our fellow-creatures, they have been more aggravated, because committed against goodness the most astonishing, light the most clear, and advantages the most distinguishing. And Thou hast seen all, and abhorred all, and couldst easily and righteously have punished us for all. But thou hast not executed upon us the fierceness of thine anger, because Thou art God and not man. More than all Thou didst devise means for our restoration to Thy favor, and image, and presence.

[Occasional petitions on any or all the following topics:

Bless God for the purpose of grace before the world began, and in the fulness of time accomplished in Christ.

Rejoice that He has given us the dispensation of the Spirit.

Bless God for a declared gospel.

Supplication for joy and peace in believing; for sentiments and tempers conformed to the example left us; for self-sacrificing devotion to God and his cause, in return for his love to us.

For grace not to wound Christ in the house of his friends, rather to die than bring reproach upon his cause; for the increase of the number who love his salvation.]

We praise Thee as the length of our days and the God of our mercy. In the morning we committed ourselves to Thy care, and Thou hast been with us in our going out and our coming in, and hast kept us in all our ways. Pardon whatever Thou hast seen amiss in us through another period of our time. Accept the charge of us through the approaching night, and grant us the sleep which Thou givest to Thy beloved; for we hope we desire it not only as creatures, but

as Christians; not only to gratify our feelings, but to renew our strength for Thy service, and to fit us to glorify Thee in our bodies as well as in our spirits, through our adorable Redeemer. Amen.

Tuesday Morning.

[Rev. William Jay, abridged.]

O Thou omnipresent and omniscient Jehovah! Thou art about our path, and our lying down; and Thou art acquainted with all our ways. There is not a word in our tongue, but lo! O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thou understandest our very thoughts afar off. Yea the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.

Known, therefore, unto Thee are all our sins with every aggravation; and our necessities, with all their circumstances. Yet Thou requirest us to confess our guilt, and to spread our wants before Thee, in order that we ourselves may be suitably affected with them, and be prepared for the promised displays of Thy goodness.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

Acknowledgment of God's mercy and our deserts; we are not consumed; we have been unmindful; rebelled; loved the creature more than the creator; we have crowned all our guilt by neglecting thy salvation.

O deal not with us after our deserts; we love thy salvation; shine into our hearts.

We extend our wishes beyond the little circle now kneeling in thy presence, to absent connections.

We would remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them.]

Let glory dwell in our land, and upon all the glory may there be a defense. Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion; build Thou the walls of Jerusalem. Make bare thine

arm in the sight of all the nations ; and let all the ends of the earth see the salvation of our God.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with us all, now and evermore. Amen.

Tuesday Evening.

[Rev. William Jay.]

O Thou who wast, and art, and art to come, the Almighty! With Thee is the fountain of life. In thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. It is our privilege as well as our duty to draw near to Thee. It is the prerogative of our nature, that of all creatures in this lower world, we alone are made capable of knowing, resembling, serving, and enjoying Thee. All our degradation and misery have been produced by our alienation and absence from Thee; and all our happiness and perfection depend upon our reunion and intercourse with Thee. We, therefore, bless Thee for the revelation Thou hast given us, and by which we learn, that Thy thoughts towards us are thoughts of peace and not of evil.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics :

Adoration, in view of the new and living way into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

Supplication, that its design may be accomplished in us.

Confession—lament that his service has been so little our employment and our enjoyment; after all our instruction, our ears are yet so dull of hearing ; the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit Thou wilt not despise.

Prayer for the supply of the Spirit of Jesns Christ; decision of character ; always to realize the divine presence ; patience and submission under the trials of life.

Our afflictions are few ; more reason to be thankful than to complain. Bless the Lord, O our souls.]

We praise Thee for the protection, the supplies, and the comforts of another day. Take us under Thy care for the night on which we have entered. May no evil befal us, nor any plague come nigh our dwelling. Refresh our bodies and renew our strength by needful repose, and when we awake, may we still be with God, and rise to love Thee more and serve Thee better than we ever have done, through our Lord and Saviour, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Wednesday Morning.

[Rev. William Jay.]

Again we lift our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our help. Our help is in the name of the Lord God, who made heaven and earth.

Thou art the author of all existence, and the source of all blessedness. We adore Thee for making us capable of knowing Thee: for possessing us with reason and conscience, and for leading us to inquire, Where is God my Maker, that giveth songs in the night? We praise Thee for the revelation of the gospel. Here we look into Thy very heart, and see that it is the dwelling place of piety. Here we see Thy thoughts toward us, and find that they are thoughts of peace and not of evil. Here we see Thee waiting to be gracious, and exalted to have mercy.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

To be found in the number of those, who not only hear, but know the joyful sound, and seek with earnestness, and IMMEDIATELY, what is requisite to our eternal interests, because our time is short; that we may obtain ere the harvest is past.

For the experience of a present salvation, in the comforts and renewings of the Holy Ghost. For deliverance from the disposition of the slave, and to be upheld by Thy free Spirit.

For simplicity and godly sincerity.

For benevolent dispositions; freely having received, freely to give.

Thanksgiving, that the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places. May we invite others to taste and see that the Lord is good.]

O God, count us worthy of this calling, and fulfill in us the good pleasure of Thy goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Wednesday Evening.

[Rev. William Jay, abridged.]

O Thou that hearest prayer—through Him who is the great intercessor, let our prayer come before Thee as incense, and the lifting up of our hands as the evening sacrifice. We bless Thee as our Creator, the framer of our bodies, and the former of our souls within us. We praise Thee for the blessings of Thy providence which encompass us on every side, and are continued to us, notwithstanding our unworthiness.

But, above all, we thank Thee for thine unspeakable gift. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

Prayer for union with Christ; for faith and pardon; for grace to conform to his meek example in doing good, and especially to the household of faith; for the spread of his kingdom or government.

Desire to give evidence of the sincerity of our prayers, by exertions and sacrifices, by coöperation with his ministers; by adorning his doctrine in our respective stations.]

And let us not labor in vain, nor spend our strength for nought. May we be the honored instruments of saving

some soul from death ; and of producing joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

Above all, render us successful among those who are more fully under our instruction, influence and authority. May we rule well our own house ; and have the pleasure to see all the members of our family, fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ; of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Thursday Morning.

[Rev. Willliam Jay.]

O Lord, Thou art good, and Thou doest good. Thou hast revealed thyself as nigh unto all that call upon Thee, to all that call upon Thee in truth. May we who now address Thee be found the heirs of this promise ; nor suffer us to incur the reproach of drawing nigh to Thee with the mouth and honoring Thee with our lips, while our hearts are far from Thee. Unite our hearts to fear thy name ; and grant that we may worship Thee in spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. We remember that we are sinners, and conscious of our guilt we could indulge no hope hadst not thou revealed a Mediator, in whom thou art reconciling the world unto thyself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics :

Acknowledgment of mercies ; Providential mercies ; God has not left himself without witness in this respect. Spiritual mercies. The sending of his Son. With God is mercy. *That* mercy the publican sought. *That* mercy disappoints not. *One* thing is needful above what we eat or drink or are clothed with.

Supplication for the comforts of the Spirit ; for piety, and wisdom, and the Christian temper ; for disengagement from the present evil world, and love to the saints of God ; for grace to enable us to walk by faith ; to weigh both worlds, so that the eternal may preponderate.]

By thy mercies we renew this morning the consecration of ourselves to thy service. Go forth with us to the concerns of the day. Keep us in all our ways. Innumerable are our dangers; but the greatest of all is sin. Uphold our goings, therefore, in thy word, and let not iniquity have dominion over us. May we abstain from all appearance of evil; and the very God of peace sanctify us wholly; and may our whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And to God only wise, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honor and praise forever and ever. Amen.

Thursday Evening.

[Rev. William Jay.]

O God, thy greatness is unsearchable. Thy name is most excellent in all the earth. Thou hast set thy glory above the heavens. Thousands minister unto thee, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before thee. We feel ourselves in thine awful presence to be nothing, less than nothing, vanity; nor do we presume to approach thee because we are deserving of thy notice—for we have sinned—we have incurred thy righteous displeasure—we acknowledge that thou art justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

Accept our approach, for thou art nigh unto them who are of a broken heart; with the multitude of others, may we be pardoned, &c.

Prayer for mercy; for conviction of sin both as to its penalty and pollution; for faith in Christ.

Prayer for a higher state of piety; for life, and life more abundantly; that we may not question our state, and that the imperfections of our religion may be removed. For patience under suffering; when reviled, to revile not again, walking in the steps of Him who left us an example.

Prayer for a happy end in view of the changes of the world; honoring God in the life that we may glorify him in death. For forgiveness of the sins of the past day.]

And now, O thou keeper of Israel, we commit our souls and bodies to thy all-sufficient care. Suffer no evil to befal our persons, and no plague to come nigh our dwelling. May our sleep be sweet; or if thou holdest our eyes waking, may we remember thee upon our bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches.

And with the innumerable company who never slumber nor sleep, and who rest not day and night, we would join in ascribing blessing and honor and glory and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever. Amen.

Friday Morning.

[Rev. William Jay.]

O thou whose name alone is Jehovah, the most high over all the earth! When we consider thy majesty and thy purity, and reflect upon our meanness and guilt, how shall we come before the Lord, or bow before the high God? But we are encouraged to approach thee, by the revelation thou hast given us of thyself as the Lord God, gracious and merciful; and by the mediation of thy dear Son. We are assured that He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and being raised from the dead, entered into the holy place, there to appear in the presence of God for us.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

Supplication for assurance of faith in drawing near to God; not to offend God still more by our unbelief; for receiving Christ immediately and fully; for love and delight in his salvation; for full consecration; for proving our hope, by its purifying us from sin, weaning us from the world, and causing us to live with our conversation in heaven. For patience to submit to the trials of the present time, looking for the appearing of the great God, &c.

For upholding grace, as we cannot trust in our own hearts and purposes.]

And now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

Friday Evening.

[Rev. William Jay.]

O God, the day is thine; the night also is thine. Thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice. The heavens declare thy glory; the earth is full of thy riches, and so is the great and wide sea. Thou art the maker, and sustainer, and proprietor of all things. We are the creatures of thy power, and the beneficiaries of thy bounty. But we have sinned against heaven and before thee, and are not worthy of the least of all the mercies and truth which thou hast showed us. We are of those that rebel against the light; for we have resisted the dictates of our consciences; the demands of thy law; the admonitions of thy providence; and the calls of the gospel of peace.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

Confession of divine mercy, in that we are yet in the land of the living.

Flee for refuge to the Saviour.

Prayer: to be found in Him; to be delivered from the disposition of men of this world; to feel the heart of strangers and pass the days of sojourning here in fear; not to be cast away from thy presence in our journeyings; nor to have the Holy Spirit taken from us; to keep us from falling.]

These are great blessings for us to ask; but we are undone forever without them; and thou hast encouraged us to hope for them. We plead thy command and thy promise:

"Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." No suppliant, however unworthy or guilty, was ever rejected or insulted at thy footstool. And we come in the name of Him who made intercession for the transgressors. Him thou hearest always—and to Him, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be praises forever and ever. Amen.

Saturday Morning.

[Rev. William Jay.]

O God, thou art great and greatly to be feared. And thou art also merciful and gracious; long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth. May we so feel our sinfulness as to be humbled in the dust before thee, and filled with self-condemnation and self-despair; but let us not shrink back from thy presence, and be afraid to place our faith and hope in the God of love. Help us to remember, that if we have no claim on the footing of desert, we can plead thy promise and invitation; and if the blessings we want are infinitely great, they are dispensed as gifts whose freeness delights in the unworthiness of the receiver.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

Confession: neither deny nor palliate guilt; have refused thy calls.

Prayer: for change of nature; washing of regeneration; for wakefulness and attention; for improving transient moments; for remembrance, that this is not the place of our rest, that we must progress; for preparation for every changing scene; for remembrance, that trials are blessings in disguise; for grace to walk by faith.]

We would not forget those that are in affliction. Do not thou, O God, forget them. Whatever be their losses or distresses, help them to say, Yet the Lord thinketh upon me. May they know that thy thoughts toward them are

thoughts of peace and not of evil, to bring them to an expected end, though it may be by a painful passage. Comfort those who are on beds of languishing. Enter the house of mourning. Be the father of the fatherless, and the husband of the widow, and the friend and helper of the poor and needy—and have mercy upon all men.

Our Father, &c.

Saturday Evening.

[Rev. William Jay.]

O God, thou art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, continually doing wonders. And it is not one of the least of thy wonderful works that we are yet on this side of an awful eternity, and not reaping the due reward of our deeds. We look on each other this evening with astonishment, and exclaim, it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed. Our whole life has been a scene of provocation against thy divine majesty; and if we, with all our ignorance and self-love, can see so much depravity in ourselves, what must have presented itself to THY VIEW, O thou, who knowest all things, in whose sight the very heavens are not clean, and who seest more pollution even in our duties than we ever found in our sins! There is no health in us. We have no works or worthiness to excite thy regard; and if ever we are saved, it must be according to thy own purpose and grace, in Christ Jesus.

[Occasional petitions on any or all of the following topics:

Come in the dear name of Him who loved us, and maketh intercession, and who alone is our dependence.

Prayer: to be made partakers of Him, who makes free, puts the law into our hearts, and writes it in our minds; for sanctifying our every relation, office, transaction, and condition in life; to be concerned principally for the soul's prosperity; to be disengaged from, and elevated above the elements of the world.

For sanctifying all our religious opportunities. Implore a blessing on the solemnities of the Sabbath; not to wait on God in vain.]

And, thus, by all the discipline of thy family, and the ordinances of thy house, may we grow in grace, and in our meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. And when the evening of life itself shall arrive, and we are called to retreat from every mortal care, may we close the period of toil and trouble, by falling asleep in Jesus, and open our eyes on the rest that remains for the people of God, and enter the temple above, to go no more out. And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all, now and forever. Amen.

A Prayer in time of the Cholera or other epidemic disease.

[Translated from the German.]

O Almighty God! we give thee hearty thanks, that thou hast graciously preserved, and so mightily defended us from our youth up to the present time; and that thou hast called us by thy saving word to the hope of eternal life. Alas, our God! we would confess from the heart, that, no less than others, we have offended thee by our sins, and that we well deserve the present raging epidemic of poisonous pestilences and diseases. Thou art true in thy threatenings, and righteous in all thy judgments; we, however, must take to ourselves shame; for we have transgressed thy commands, and sinned in many ways: therefore the curse with which thou hast threatened us has come upon us. We have poisoned the atmosphere, as it were, with our offensive, polluting sins; and hence the more justly, the fiery dart of sickness has been hurled upon us.

But, O Lord, thou art also merciful, gracious, patient and of great goodness! Deal not with us after our sins, nor

enter into judgment with us according to our transgressions; but be gracious to us, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Purify us by the precious blood of Christ, and wash us, that we may be white as snow. Sanctify and govern us by thy Spirit, that we may repent and fall into thine arms.

Thou art our comfort, our strong tower, our God, in thee do we hope and trust. Deliver us from the snare of the fowler, from the noisome pestilence; cover us with thy feathers, that under thy wings we may "not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence which walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day." Protect us that no evil may befall us, and no plague come nigh our dwelling. Give thine angels charge concerning us, that they may protect and keep us in all our ways; that they may bear us in their arms, that we dash not our foot against a stone. We earnestly desire it of thee, therefore do thou hear us; we know thy name, therefore do thou supply us; we cry to thee, O Lord! therefore do thou help us. Be with us in this time of need; deliver us from our perils, and show us thy salvation.

But if it be thy will to visit us with punishment, or to take us entirely from this world, bestow upon us steadfastness in the faith, strengthening comfort, and joyful hope, and patience, through the power of thy Holy Spirit. Soothe our pains, shorten the death-pang, turn away the power of Satan; and take up our souls into thy hands, for the sake of Jesus Christ our deliverer and Saviour. Amen.

A Prayer for a newly Married Pair.

[Rev. William Jay.]

Bless those who have just entered a state honorable in all. May they remember the vows they have left at the altar, and in the discharge of their personal and relative

duty, may they make thy word their rule, that mercy and peace may be upon them. May the husband love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband, and both walk together as heirs of the grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered.

Preserve them from the evils which destroy or diminish the welfare and comfort of the condition in which thou hast placed them; and may they enjoy all the happiness derivable from prudence, temper, accommodation, real godliness, and the divine blessing.

May they expect to discern infirmities in one another, but may they always be most deeply conscious of their own. And let them not look for unattainable, by looking for unmingled bliss on earth; but remember that this is not our rest, and be prepared for difficulties, trials changes and final separation.

A Prayer for one going on a journey.

[Translated from the German.]

Heavenly Father, merciful and faithful God! I give thee hearty thanks, that thou hast thus far guarded me, and conferred upon me so much that is good, both temporal and spiritual. Be gracious unto me, O Lord, I beseech thee, and pardon all my iniquities for Christ's sake. Sanctify and renew me more and more through the power of thy Holy Spirit, that I may daily better my life, proceed in that course in which thou wouldst have me to go, and serve thee with that holiness and righteousness which is well-pleasing in thy sight.

Holy Father! do thou further guide and lead me upon my journey, by the protection of thy beloved angel, that I may be secure against murderers and robbers, against poisonous atmosphere and epidemic diseases, and against strife and war and disaster. Grant unto me, Lord, food and cloth-

ing, and lead me in the right way which I ought to pursue; and grant thy blessing to my design, in order that all may promote thy glory, and be, on the whole, for the best, and redound to the present and everlasting well-being of myself and my friends.

Keep and preserve, to this end, all those who are dear to me, and what thou hast given me; and grant that we may meet each other again in health and peace. Especially, I beseech thee, my God! to preserve me from every artifice and wicked device of Satan, and of his emissaries and instruments. Keep and strengthen in me the true and saving faith, the Christian love, patience and hope; and grant that I may use the prosperity of this life with comfort and an unviolated conscience, and may end my career happily, and joyfully enter into heaven, my fatherland.

To thee, O Lord! do I commend my going-out and my coming-in, from this time forth forever-more. Amen.

A Prayer suitable for a sick person.

[Translated from the German.]

O Lord, heavenly Father! Thou art a true God and faithful, and sufferest none of thy creatures to be tempted above that they are able; but dost with the temptation, also make a way of escape that we may be able to bear it. I beseech thee, in my great need and pain, permit not the cross to become too heavy for me. Strengthen me, that I may bear it with patience, and never more be discouraged in view of thy mercy.

O Saviour Jesus! the Son of the living God, who hast suffered the pain of the cross for me, and finally died for my sins, to thee do I cry from the bottom of my heart, be merciful to me a sinful being. Forgive all my misconduct toward thee, of which I have been guilty during my whole life. Keep me in true faith until my end.

O God the Holy Ghost! thou true comforter in every time of need, keep me in patience and heartfelt supplication to God. Sanctify me with true assurance of faith, and leave me not in my great need. Lead me out of this valley of tears into the proper father-land. Amen.

A Prayer suitable for a sick person, in anticipation of death.

[Translated from the German.]

O Lord God and gracious Father! I perceive that the time of my departure is near at hand. My life will soon come to a close. May thy will be done! But, inasmuch as my heart yet suffers, and my weakness and distress are great, out of which thou alone canst deliver, O Lord! do thou soothe and shorten my death-pangs! Withdraw thy chastening hand, that I may find rest and be refreshed, before I go hence, and be no more. A great anxiety for soothing comfort, and a fear lest it will be withheld, possess my breast. O Lord take my soul freely to thyself, and forgive my sins for the sake of Jesus. Strengthen my faith, impart unto me comfort, patience and steadfastness through the power of the Holy Spirit; and help me happily to triumph and conquer. Amen.

Another Prayer suitable for a sick person, who wishes to dispose himself for death.

O Father of all grace! have mercy upon my poor soul. Forgive all my sins, which I have grievously committed against Thee. Despise not thy poor creature; disdain not me who am the workmanship of thy hand. Let not him be destroyed, whom thou hast made; for in thee do I hope; thou art my help and my God.

O Jesus, thou true Saviour! who art the Lamb of God, who hast borne the sins of the world; who hast washed and

purified me in thy blood; I beseech thee for the sake of thy bitter sufferings, especially through the pangs thou didst experience at the separation of thy noble and generous soul from the body, have mercy upon my poor soul in its departure, and guide it to everlasting life.

O God the Holy Ghost! Thou sweet Comforter! keep my heart against every attack of the enemy of my soul. Strengthen my faith, that I may believe in the forgiveness of sin and life everlasting.

And now, O Holy Trinity! into thy hands do I commit my spirit; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth, who livest and governest forever. Amen.

A Prayer for the dying, by those who are present.

[Translated from the German.]

Merciful and beloved God and Father, who holdest the issues of life and death in thy hands! Whilst thou dost thus heavily visit this, thy child, with that which is the common lot of all, we would entreat thee, in true faith in the name of Jesus Christ, to be merciful to us and to this sick person, now lying on the verge of death. Pardon all his and our sins. Sanctify and strengthen us, and especially this sick person, with the power of the Holy Spirit.

O gracious God, thou Father of all mercies, behold the trembling heart, the feeble spirit, and the wounded limbs of the sick in mercy, and come thou quickly to his relief. Be thou in thy power, strength in his weakness. Soothe and shorten to him his great fears and pains. Comfort him, thou mighty comforter. Help, thou strong deliverer, and show us and him thy salvation. Preserve in him the true faith, the steadfast hope and patience; and if it be thy will that his death should take place now, do thou help him to triumph, by the power of thy Holy Spirit, and attain to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer of thanksgiving for one who has recovered from sickness.

[Translated from the German.]

My Lord, my God, my Comforter, my Deliverer, my only helper in time of need! to thee I give thanks, from the bottom of my heart, for the inexpressible and manifold benefits which thou hast conferred upon me a poor sinner; but especially that, in my great need, in my sickness and misery, thou didst graciously look upon me, and strengthen my heart, and hear my prayer, and graciously restore me to health. To thee I give thanks, O LORD! that although thou wast angry with me, thine anger was turned away, and thou comfortedst me again. How good is it to me that thou didst humble me! O beloved Father! thou hast chastened me, in order that I might not be condemned with the world. I was fearful lest I should not be comforted; but Lord! thou didst heartily receive and cheer me. What shall I render to thee for all thy benefits to me? I will thank thee all the days of my life, and make known thy glory forever and ever. When I sought thee thou didst answer me, and deliver me out of my distresses. Thou wilt not forsake those who seek thee. Thou hearest prayer, therefore every living creature cometh to thee. Thou art near to those who are of a broken heart, and savest such as be of a contrite spirit.

O my God! impart unto me a heartfelt and permanent repentance, through the power of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of Christ; in order that I may henceforth sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon me; against which may I guard my soul all my life. Protect me also, henceforth, by thy holy angels, that they may keep me in all my ways. And inasmuch as I must finally depart this life, do thou preserve and increase in me a true and saving faith, the fear

of God, patience and comfort, with which I may manfully contend, happily conquer, and joyfully enter into the kingdom of heaven, to praise thee, Father, Son and Holy Spirit forever. To thee, the most high God, be praise, and honor, and thanksgiving ascribed throughout all eternity. Amen.

Prayers before meat.

Merciful Father, look down with tender compassion upon us. Commiserate us according to our several necessities, and bless this food to the nourishment of these, our frail bodies. Pardon our imperfections, and ultimately receive us into the mansions of bliss. All which we ask for Christ's sake. Amen.

Our heavenly Father, be pleased to bless us, thy unworthy creatures, and these thy gifts, which we receive from thy benign goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bountiful giver of every good and perfect gift! Thou art never weary of supplying our returning wants. Subdue our hearts, that we may receive these and all other blessings with gratitude, and give us grace that, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we may do all to thy glory through Jesus our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

Almighty God! the eyes of all wait on thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. Bless, we beseech thee, the provisions of thine earthly bounty, which are now before us, and let them nourish and strengthen our frail bodies, that we may the better serve thee, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Almighty God, be pleased to pardon our sins, and bless the refreshment now before us, to our use, and us to thy service, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Bounteous God, we acknowledge our dependence on thee, and our unworthiness of thy benefits. We pray thee to forgive our sins, to bless us in the reception of this food, and to enable us to improve the strength we may derive from it, to thy glory, for Christ's sake. Amen.

After Meat.

We thank thee, O God our heavenly Father! for the innumerable good gifts of thy providence. Especially do we thank thee for the rich provision thou hast made for our souls. Accept our grateful acknowledgments for the food we have now received; and enable us to prove our sincerity, by the holiness and obedience of our lives, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Accept, heavenly Father, our humble thanks for this and for all thy blessings, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

We thank thee, our heavenly Father, for the rich provisions thou hast made for our temporal and eternal welfare; but especially for the food we have now received. May thy goodness lead us to repentance, and thy grace prepare us for heavenly entertainments, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We praise thee, O Lord, for the provisions of thy providence and grace, and, in particular, for this renewed token of thy favor. May we feel our increased obligations to be thine, and be fitted at length to eat bread in thy heavenly kingdom, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

We bless thee, O Lord, for this kind refreshment. Be pleased to continue thy favors, and feed us with the bread of life! Supply the wants of the needy, and enable us, while we live upon thy bounty, to live to thy glory, for Christ's sake. Amen.

For want of room I cannot extend the collection of prayers any further.

The following occasions and subjects may call for special prayers suitable to them :

The evening after a funeral; Christmas morning ; Christmas evening; last evening of the old year; first morning of the new year; Good Friday morning; Good Friday evening; Easter Sunday morning ; Easter Sunday evening ; Whitsunday morning; Whitsunday evening; Fast day morning ; Fast day evening; Thanksgiving day morning; Thanksgiving day evening ; for friends in different circumstances ; thanksgiving for creation—for redeemption—for the Church and the means of grace—for baptism—for the Lord's Supper—for the divine care—for the divine mercy—for preservation in dangers seen and unseen—for hearing prayer.

Prayer before self-examination—for repentance—for true confession—for pardon of sins.

Thanksgiving for pardon—repentance, and conversion.

Prayer before communion—for true preparation—while partaking of the elements, offered silently.

Thanksgiving for the spiritual nourishment of the Lord's Supper.

Prayer for grace to improve the sacrament to edification and sanctification—for the Holy Spirit—for faith—for the new birth—for perfection of Christian character—for spiritual joy and peace—for grace to lead a holy life—for true wisdom—for self-humiliation—for the mortification of the old man—against besetting sin—for a good conscience—for imitating Christ—for the love of God—for child-like fear—for steady hope—for heartfelt trust in God—for the preservation and prosperity of the Church—for full and entire love—for patience under trial—for true spiritual happiness —for holy obedience—for humility—for Christian mildness —for honesty and kindness to neighbors—for reconcilableness or meekness—for victory over Satan—for governing

the tongue—against the attacks of the flesh, evil thoughts and lusts—for self-knowledge—for a proper fulfilling of one's calling—for the necessaries of life—for a happy end—in view of the judgment day—in view of eternal life—paraphrase of the Lord's prayer—for our country and its institutions—for our rulers—for the conversion of the world.

It is desirable, that you should be constant and uniform in the exercise of prayer, both private and public. Many otherwise good and pious persons, are very fitful in the discharge of the duty of prayer, and, consequently, very irregular in the performance of every other Christian duty. This, however, is principally owing to their habits. They become habitually careless, and permit the slightest excuses to justify a neglect of prayer at times. In this respect, they are like persons who believe in falling from grace. If an individual does not believe in perseverance; if he believes that he may fall from grace, and that it is a thing to be expected, he will most likely fall and become lukewarm.

There are two very important reasons, why you should be constant in prayer. The first is, *your wants are constant.* This fact is beautifully and forcibly expressed in an essay on prayer, chiefly by that esteemed authoress, Hannah Moore, which I beg leave here to quote:

"If there be any day in which we are quite certain, that we shall meet with no trial from providence, no temptation from the world; any day in which we shall be sure to have no wrong tempers excited in ourselves, no call to bear with those of others, no misfortunes to encounter, and no need of divine assistance to endure it; on that morning we may safely omit prayer.

"If there be any evening in which we have received no protection from God, and experienced no mercy at his hands; if we have not neglected a single opportunity of doing or receiving good; if we are quite certain that we have not

once spoken unadvisedly with our lips, nor entertained one vain or idle thought in our heart; on that night we may safely omit to praise God, and to confess our own sinfulness; on that night we may safely omit humiliation and thanksgiving. To repeat the converse would be superfluous."

Another reason in favor of constancy, especially in family prayer, is, that you thereby "*let your light shine before men*," as well as by your conduct in the congregation and in the world. To set a good example is a test of Christian character, and this example should be constant and uniform. If you cannot set a good example, what will become of you, and of those over whom you have an influence? You and they will probably both be lost.

The importance of setting a good example is shown by the following extract, taken from a newspaper, the "Protestant." The writer gives an illustration from memory, which was introduced into a sermon on the text: "Let your light so shine before men."

"The preacher referred to a light-house near New York, for illustration. The light, which is a revolving one, had ceased to move, by reason of some derangement in the machinery. As soon as the keeper discovered it, he ran to the proper position, and by manual labor kept steadily revolving the light, until weariness compelled him to call another to his assistance. Then another took his turn—and so during the live-long night, and the light kept its uniform revolution. A stranger astonished at the solicitude of the keeper, inquired the cause.

"'Why,' said he, 'there *may* be a hundred seamen looking out from the darkness and storm below, to catch a glance of this light. If it move not, it will be mistaken for another, and, in their uncertainty and danger, they may lose the channel and be shipwrecked.'

"How many happy hearts passed over Broadway next day, all unconscious of the danger to which they had been

exposed, but for the faithfulness and consideration of the keeper of the light-house.

"Christian, the world is looking on you. You may not know who are below in the darkness and storm of life's troubled sea; but you know the sea is stormy, and there are dangerous shoals to be avoided. Let your light give no uncertain gleaming on the gloom. Keep its motion uniform and continued! And when the day of eternity shall dawn, thousands may tread the streets of the new Jerusalem, who, but for the brightness and regularity of your light, might have made shipwreck of faith, and never moored in the harbor of eternal safety."

To promote your spirituality and enable you to be uniform and regular in your deportment before others, it is highly advisable, that you attend to secret communion with God, and that you seek light and guidance, where alone they can be found, in God. Fall upon your knees in your closet, or go to some secret place where none but God can hear, and there let your voice ascend in earnest supplication. Let your soul engage in fervent effectual prayer to God, who heareth in secret, and will reward openly. Here you can be particular and familiar; and utter petitions which you cannot express in family worship, and in a manner which you cannot employ in any public way. Thus you can keep your light trimmed and burning and obey the direction of the apostle, when he says, "Pray without ceasing."

The times in which we live, call for praying Christians. We live in an especial manner under the dispensation of the Spirit, and if ever the "righteousness of Zion shall go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth," it must be by the effectual, fervent prayers of the righteous, offered by the individual members of the Church, who are praying Elijahs. There is no use to disguise the fact, that God "will be inquired of" for the things which he bestows on the Church and the world.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE CHURCH-MEMBER IN THE HOUR OF DEATH.

"Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

And now, dear reader, having followed you through some of your most important relations as a creature of God, from infancy and the cradle, to manhood and maturity of understanding, permit me to give you an affectionate farewell, while I accompany you, in thought, to a death bed, and to the grave, and to heaven.

The time will come when you will drop from the family circle, and the place which now knows you, will know you no more. Your weeping friends and relatives will stand around your bed-side, and see your last struggle; or you may fall in a foreign land, away from home and kindred, and by a sudden and unexpected casualty.

At that trying hour, and especially during the pains of disease, you will need all the fortitude which your own mind can summon, and the Scriptures and the Spirit of God can bestow, in order that you may, with patience, possess your soul. The best preparation for death is to live in constant expectation of it, and with a view, by the assisting grace of God, of triumph.

Death is the great crisis, which will decide the fate of every human being. It is the most important event in the history of human existence; for as death finds us, so shall we be forever. Then shall be gathered up and completed the sum total of our actions in this world, all of which will have a bearing on eternity. There is a time coming, when

it will be no benefit to us to know, whether we have been distinguished or obscure; whether we have been high or low, rich or poor; whether we have enjoyed the honors and emoluments of the world, or whether we have been compelled to pass our days in obscurity and poverty. At the day of our death, it will be no benefit to us to have enjoyed the good things of this life, if we have neglected the interests of the world to come; but it will be of everlasting benefit to us to have made our peace with God, our calling and election sure.

The object of life should be to prepare for death. We live to do something, therefore we should live to die; and if we would die happily, we must live righteously. We should live in constant preparation for death, so that, when the messenger comes, we may be ready. An elder of the Church, with whom I formed some acquaintance at the meeting of ministers and elders in Classis, when he came to die was asked by his pastor, whether he was ready, and what he thought in view of death. He replied, "Ah, brother, I have often thought of death, and now I am ready; yes, I am ready." And so it is, my dear reader, you should be prepared by thinking much and often of death, and of that which is after death. And the more so, because it may come as a thief in the night. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not at what hour your Lord doth come."

One important duty, by way of preparation for death, it seems to me, from the nature of the case, as well as by ancient and venerable usage, is the proper disposition of your possessions in money and property, provided you may have any surplus over and above your liabilities. Let the distribution be made, as reason and conscience, and the objects of benevolence demand. The cause of God should lie nearest your heart; therefore let the benevolent institutions and operations of the Church not be forgotten. It is doubtful,

whether charity demands the heaping up of riches for children. It generally gives rise to quarrels among themselves, or makes them careless and voluptuous. They are more apt to squander, than improve such favors. Better, perhaps, for them, that they should struggle, like yourself, for usefulness in the world. A good education is the best legacy which can be left to children. Having made such disposition of your property as your conscience thinks most wise and prudent, you may bid farewell to earthly cares, and summon your spirit for its departure, to be with Christ, whenever he shall call for you.

I will now suppose you to be upon a bed of sickness and in immediate prospect of death. Your pains and distress may be great, and you will need all the fortitude and patience you are capable of exercising, to bear up under them. You may say within yourself, "Is it possible, that I can suffer so much? Can my God permit his creature to be thus racked with pain? Is it possible? And if I can suffer thus here, what will it be hereafter with those who are unprepared to meet their God? I shudder to think of it." Therefore, you should be chiefly concerned to have your sins forgiven, so that, out of this valley of sorrow, you may have a passage into eternal life. God's rod and staff can sufficiently support you in the valley and shadow of death. And remember, that these comparatively light afflictions, which are but for a moment, will work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; provided you look not at the things that are seen and are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, and are eternal."

Endeavor to glorify God, by submitting patiently to his chastening hand. Kiss the rod which smites you; for he who smites does it not willingly, and from a spirit of revenge, but as a necessary consequence of sin by the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve in Para-

dise. Be not unnecessarily alarmed in view of the terrors of death; for he, who has been your comfort in life, will also be your comfort in death. He has taken away the sting of death, which is sin. He will send his angels, who are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, to carry you into Abraham's bosom, and to the society of the holy saints. "Jesus has destroyed him, who had the power of death, that is, the devil." He has destroyed his power and circumscribed his influence, "and has delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." Jesus will send light and comfort to you while you pass through the death-stream, although it may be when sight and speech shall fail you. Some he meets earlier, and some later, as they pass the valley of death.

And here, allow me to say, it is no evidence, that Christianity does not afford comfort in a dying hour, because some Christians, when they come to die, are uncomfortable and distressed a great part of the time; for this may be owing to constitutional timidity and tenderness of conscience. Neither is distress of mind an evidence of the want of a gracious state; for some besetting sin may trouble a conscientious Christian more, than a whole life of sin can trouble one whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron, and dead to all that is true. Yet, in the last pang, when the soul is ushered into the presence of God and angels, the former shall receive peace, and the latter shall then have his conscience awakened to roar like a lion and torment him forever.

Joy and contentedness of mind is, of itself, no evidence of a gracious state; for a soothing medicine may bring a person from a complaining and distressed state of mind, to a joyful and contented state. Yet, at some period in its passage through the dark valley—it may be when the soul is so far gone that it can no more make known its feelings

by words—in the midst of bodily pain, the believer rejoices in the spirit of triumph. He then sees, that when heart and flesh fail him, God is the strength of his heart and his portion forever. Be not alarmed, therefore, if you have trusted in God; for "he will be with you, and uphold you with the right hand of his righteousness." Have faith in God, and he will bring it to pass. "Whosoever trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." Let your will be swallowed up in the will of God. If you suffer pain, it is the will of God; therefore, say: "Not my will, but thine be done." Pray for divine help. Let the breath of prayer be wafted to heaven; for "whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Saved, not because a little prayer and singing at the couch of the dying will save them; but because God will "save such as are of an humble and contrite spirit, and tremble at his word." He will renew and comfort those who sincerely repent. Among your dying words, may be those of the Saviour and the martyr Stephen: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit." "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

These are some of the suggestions, and the advice I would give you, as you leave the world in the hour of death. And in the path which I have marked out to you in the preceding pages, it shall be my endeavor, and I trust the earnest endeavor of all the members of the Church militant, to follow. I, therefore, bid you farewell, and the Church on earth bids you farewell, while angels beckon you to come away. Farewell.

A MEDITATION AND PRAYER SUITED TO THE CASE OF A DYING CHRISTIAN.

[Doddridge.]

O God! "remember thy word unto thy servant, on which thou hast caused me to hope." Permit me to consign 'this departing spirit to thine hand; for thou hast redeemed it, O Lord God of

truth.' Once more, for the last time, would I look down on this poor world which I am going to quit, and breathe out my dying prayer for its prosperity, and that of thy Church in it. I have loved it, O Lord! as a living member of thy body; and I love it to the last. I humbly beseech thee, therefore, that thou wilt guard it and purify it, and unite it more and more. Send down more of thy blessed Spirit upon it, even the spirit of wisdom, of holiness, and of love; till in due time 'the wilderness be turned into the garden of the Lord,' and all flesh shall see thy salvation!

"As for me, bear me, O my heavenly Father! on the wings of everlasting love, to that peaceful, that holy, that joyous abode, which thy mercy has prepared for me, and which the blood of my Redeemer has purchased! Bear me to the general assembly and church of the first-born, to the innumerable company of angels, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And whatever this flesh may suffer, let my steady soul be delightfully fixed on that glory to which it is rising! Let faith perform its last office in an honorable manner! Let my few remaining moments on earth be spent for thy glory, and so let me ascend, with love in my heart, and praise on my faltering tongue, to the world where love and praise shall be complete! Be this my last song on earth, which I am going to tune in heaven: 'Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.'" Amen.

A Meditation on Death, from the German of Schmolke. Translated by Mills.

That I shall die, full well I know,
All human life is short and frail,
No lasting good can earth bestow,
All portion here must quickly fail.
That I may always be prepared
For death, and for thy great award.

When I shall die, to ask were vain;
Death does his work in varied forms;
To some with agonies of pain,
And some sink peaceful in his arms,

Just as thou wilt : if, when 'tis past,
My soul be found with thee at last.

Where I shall die, I know it not,
Nor where my ashes shall be laid ;
Only be it my happy lot,
With saints redeemed to leave the dead.
Small care to me the place affords—
The earth throughout is all the Lord's.

But when in death I shall recline,
Then let my soul ascend to thee ;
Through Christ's redemption I am thine,
By faith his glories now I see—
'Twill all be well! I little prize,
Where, how, or when this body dies.

CHAPTER XXV.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS IN THE CHURCH.

I

History of Samuel the prophet, and of Hophni, and Phinehas, the sons of the priest Eli, adapted principally to young readers.

It is often said by those who are strangers to true religion, and disbelievers in the revelation which God has given us, that a change of heart is not necessary; that all that is required is, to follow the dictates of reason and the promptings of our nature; that it is necessary only to study the laws of nature and the Scriptures as they may be interpreted and used for mere moral suasion. Now this is a great mistake. We must be taught, not only by the word, but also by the Spirit of God, through the medium and means of his appointment. This is illustrated in the history of Samuel the prophet, and of Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli.

There was, in the days of Eli, the priest, a woman named Hannah, and her husband's name was Elkanah. She had a son, whom she called Samuel, which means, "Asked from the Lord;" for she had prayed, that she might have a son. She promised herself, and promised the Lord also, that, if she should have a son, she would do all she could, to bring him up in a pious way. And more than this, she promised, that she would consecrate him to the Lord, to be a priest. Accordingly she commenced with him that course of training, which would fit him for the place she intended

he should occupy. She commenced it, of course, when he was yet an infant.

Soon after Samuel's birth, the family of Elkanah went up to a place called Shiloh, to offer the yearly sacrifice; for at that time, the people of Israel had no temple or church to worship in, and consequently for the time being, the Ark rested at Shiloh. The Ark, as you are aware, was a square chest, in which was placed Aaron's rod that budded, and a portion of the manna, which the children of Israel brought with them from the wilderness, and a copy of the law given by Moses. Wherever this Ark was, there God was present in a peculiar manner; and in front of it, the people sacrificed and offered religious worship.

When the time came for the yearly sacrifice, Hannah said she would not go until the child was weaned; and then she would go and leave it there at Shiloh. "I will not go up," said she, "until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord and abide there forever." So, when he was weaned, she took him up to Shiloh, where the Ark was, and where Eli the priest resided; and she said to Eli, in substance: "I am the woman that prayed so earnestly here some time ago, whom you thought to be deranged or drunk with wine; but I was neither deranged nor intoxicated. I prayed for this child, and the Lord heard my prayer; therefore, also I have brought him to you to consecrate him to the Lord for a priest. I lend him to the Lord. He gave him to me, and I lend him to him; as long as he liveth, shall he be lent to the Lord."

The age of Samuel, at this time, is not known; only it is said, "the child was young." Yet young as he was, it is said, "he worshipped the Lord there." No doubt by this time he was soundly converted to God, and though he was not united to Christ in that full and real way, as the branch is united to the vine, which was afterwards revealed, and is

now enjoyed—for Christ had not yet come in the flesh—yet, he was made a partaker of that order of spiritual life which then existed, and which made him, and all the Old Testament saints, capable of afterwards receiving the full stream of the divine human life, as it flows from Christ's glorified body in heaven, by the power of which both soul and body shall be sanctified, and the latter raised up at the last day. He was born again, however; born of the Spirit. And this took place in answer to the prayers of his mother. Often did she pray for him before he was born, and afterwards, no doubt, she breathed over him many a prayer as he hung on her breast. "And he worshipped the Lord there." This was a glorious occasion for Hannah; her prayers were fulfilled, and now she prayed and said: "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord; my horn (my emblem of triumph) is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over my enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation." No doubt some mocked at her simple trust in the Lord, and thought her curious; but she rejoiced and triumphed over them in spirit. She left the child, therefore, with Eli at Shiloh, and returned home.

Now it so happened, that Eli had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, and they were very wicked. In the account given of them in the Bible, it is said, "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." They oppressed the people and caused them to go astray from the Lord by their evil example. They were guilty of tyranny, fraudulence, voluptuousness and lewdness. "Wherefore," it is said, "the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord; for men abhorred the offering of the Lord." All this time Samuel also, though but a child, ministered before the Lord. He saw all that Hophni and Phinehas did; and perhaps he ventured sometimes to reprove them, for which these wicked young men, probably treated him very ill. But he bore it all patiently.

It is said, "he ministered before the Lord." Doubtless he wished for no better pleasure; he desired no more agreeable employment. Give him but the privilege of enjoying his religion, and casting his cares upon God, and living in communion with him, and he was happy. He must have been severely tried and strongly tempted by wicked examples; but in the midst of all this, he realized God's presence. He felt, "Thou God seest me." He was satisfied, because he was allowed to "minister before the Lord." Moreover, to make up for the abuse of Hophni and Phineas and other unfavorable influences, and to prevent his becoming discouraged, his mother and his father Elkanah, visited him several times a year to encourage and advise him. His mother also, with that characteristic kindness so peculiar to a mother, when she wishes to encourage and stimulate her child by little deeds of love, made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when they went up to the yearly sacrifice. But above all, he had the anointing of the Holy Spirit to keep him from evil. So it is said: "The child Samuel grew on, and was in favor with the Lord, and also with men." Happy boy; his delight was in the law of the Lord, and in his law did he meditate day and night.

"Now Eli was very old," it is said, and he did not know the conduct of his sons; but the people told him of it. "He heard all that his sons did unto Israel." So he reproved them; but he reproved them so slightly that they did not mind it—they did not heed his reproof. "Notwithstanding, they hearkened not unto the voice of their father," and for their disobedience, "the Lord determined to slay them." Eli was not sufficiently strenuous; and perhaps he neglected them when they were young. He did not command them, and entreat them, as for their life, to flee from idolatry and every species of wickedness. He did not pray

fervently with and for them, and, by the help of God, bring them thus to feel the necessity of obeying God, and obtaining his Spirit. O, what a pity! Eli was a good man; but he neglected his duty in this respect.

Thus things grew worse and worse; the people became wicked and worshippers of Baal, by seeing the example of Hophni and Phinehas. About this time, a man of God came to Eli, and pronounced the threatenings of God upon him for his neglect of duty. By him God threatened to destroy the whole family of Eli, for their wickedness. "Wherefore," said the Lord, "kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honorest thy sons above me, to make themselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father should walk before me forever: but now the Lord saith: Be it far from me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

The sons of Eli made a worse than mercenary employment of their office. They sacrified only to obtain meat to satisfy their appetite; and they took more than their portion. Not only did they break the command of God in the manner in which they performed the duties of their station, but in the spirit also, which they manifested. They did not regard God at all, nor stand in awe of him as the holy and almighty God. They were actuated merely by human relations, and human motives, and consequently looked upon God, if they regarded him at all, as such an one as themselves. God was not revealed to their souls. They had no true faith, such as that of Abel of blessed memory. The consequence was, that they fell into all manner of wickedness. The people followed their example, and every thing seemed to be going to destruction. But the Lord took care

of his cause. He purposed to punish the house of Eli, and to raise up other instruments. To Eli he said: "And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind." The Lord also revealed to Samuel the fact, young as he was, that he was going to destroy the family of Eli. "And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day will I perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin I will also make an end, for I have told him that I will judge his house forever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

On account of the unfaithfulness of the priests and the people, the Lord made no revelations to them; for it is said, "there was no open vision in those days; and the word of the Lord was precious in those days." That is, the people would have highly prized, as they greatly needed and afterward received, through Samuel, the directions of the Almighty. "The child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli." And the Lord made revelations to him. In the third chapter of the first book of Samuel, there is a very touching account of the first prophetic revelation which Samuel received. This was followed by others. The people heard of it, and encouraged by this, instead of first improving their hearts and minds and honoring God, they were stimulated, first, to remove their social and political evils. They had gone so far in their apostacy, that they needed, and did receive, additional chastisements, before they could be brought truly to repent. They were subjected to ill treatment by their neighboring nation, the Philis-

tines They were oppressed and made to pay heavy taxes. The difficulty could be decided only by war. Accordingly, the children of Israel marched out, and pitched their tents at Ebenezer, and the Philistines pitched in Aphek. As they went into battle the Israelites were smitten before the Philistines, and about four thousand of their number were slain in the field.

They returned to their camp, and the elders of Israel said: "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to day before the Philistines?" Ah! they might have known why. They might have known, that it was on account of the sins of the people. But so it was; they were so stupid and forgetful of their duty, that they did not, it seems, think of it. "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us?" they inquired. So they fell upon another expedient. They knew that God regarded the Ark of the covenant with a peculiar favor, and supposed that he would not suffer it to fall into the hands of their enemies. They brought the Ark of the covenant from Shiloh, with Hophni and Phinehas with it, and took it with them into battle, thinking that God's peculiar presence would save it to them; for God dwelt in a peculiar manner between the cherubim on the mercy seat, the covering of the ark. "And when the Ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again." And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout they feared, and said to one another, when they learned that the Ark of the Lord was come into the camp of the Hebrews; "Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness. Be strong and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants to the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men and fight." And what was the result? "Israel

was smitten again, and about thirty thousand of them fell, and the Ark was taken, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas were slain." They were completely routed. And a man of the tribe of Benjamin ran to the city of Shiloh to tell the disastrous news; and as he came into the town the whole city cried out with lamentations on account of the sad intelligence. The man came with his clothes rent and earth upon his head, the usual sign of woe and calamity.

While these events were transpiring, "Eli was sitting on a seat by the way side watching; for his heart trembled for the Ark of God." He waited to hear the fate of the Ark. He was very old, being ninety-eight years of age, and could not see, and consequently only conjectured, when he heard the distant sound of feet and conversation, as to what had taken place; but when he heard the noise of the tumult, he anxiously inquired what the noise of the crying meant. "And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, what is there done, my son? And the messenger answered, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the Ark of God is taken." And when he heard this sad news, "he fell backward from off his seat by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died."

Thus ended the family of Eli, and thus increased the calamities of Israel. But all this while, God was preparing Samuel to be their leader out of difficulties. God never leaves his people entirely; but by his providence and grace he raises up those who fear him in deed and in truth. When those who are in authority are unfaithful, God raises up others who shall vindicate his honor; and thus his cause is saved, his name is glorified, his people are rescued from ob-

livion, and his Church is preserved. "The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up."

Doubtless Samuel had remonstrated with the people, against their conduct; but the majority did not listen to him at the time, and continued to follow their own ways. For it must be remembered, that Samuel had now become a prophet; God having revealed himself to him, and informed him what would be the fate of Eli and his house, unless a great change took place. These things he told the people, with many others, which made a deep impression on their minds. It is said, "Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord." "The Lord did let none of his words fall to the ground." Some may have given little or no heed to them, at the time they were spoken; but when subsequent events proved them to be true, they came with tenfold weight to their recollection. For when, upwards of twenty years after the Ark was taken, during which time they began, generally, to worship idols, the Ark was returned by the Philistines, after many of them died by reason of the Ark being amongst them, and many of the Israelites of Bathshemesh were slain by touching it with their unhallowed hands—they were very willing to listen to the admonitions of Samuel, and instead of using the Ark as a charm to subdue their enemies, they entreated him to pray for them, after he had exhorted them to repent and turn to the true God with all their hearts.

The Ark of the covenant was now at Kirjath-jearim in the house of Aminadab, in the hands of lawful and ordained priests. But the people "lamented after the Lord;" for there were no regular yearly sacrifices for twenty long years. But Samuel prophesied and taught the people, and

finally brought them to repent. "And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the Lord. And they gathered together to Mizpeh." Through the instrumentality of Samuel, who was their judge or president, all difficulties between themselves and between them and their God, were reconciled.

The Philistines, hearing that "the children of Israel were gathered to Mizpeh," resolved to go up against them, thinking to defeat them as easily as they did before. But now they had Samuel and the God of Samuel to contend with. The Israelites, however, were afraid, when they heard that their enemies were coming against them, and they besought Samuel to intercede in their behalf. "Cease not," said they, "to cry unto the Lord our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines." God heard him and while he was offering sacrifices, the Philistines drew near, and "the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them."

In commemoration of this victory, Samuel erected a hasty monument, a simple stone found in the vicinity, which he called Ebenezer, "the stone of help," "saying, hitherto hath the Lord helped us." God did help them, and verified the proverb, "The battle is not to the strong." While Samuel was at the head of affairs, and the people followed his advice, and adhered to the Lord, Israel prospered. "The hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." The life and activity which the Lord infused into the affairs of the state and of society, through the instrumentality of Samuel, were seen in every direction. The Israelites became respected and feared, and were at peace with other nations.

A long prosperous period now followed under the administration of Samuel, who was raised to the highest distinction and honor, from a poor boy of the city of Ramath of

the tribe of Levi. "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life." The powers of this office, to which the Lord and the people elevated him, were similar to those of a king, and also to those of a judge in a court of justice. Samuel had his circuit and places for holding court, and he performed his duty with fidelity and general acceptance, because he governed in the fear of the Lord. "He went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places." In these places, which were cities of the Levites, and during the exercise of his judicial authority, probably, he established those institutions which were called schools of the prophets. In these seminaries of learning, young men were engaged in studying the divine and civil law and psalmody, to qualify themselves to become prophets or teachers and judges of the people. Samuel knew that a healthy and vigorous state of society could not be kept up without the diffusion of useful knowledge. He showed his wisdom, therefore, in the establishment of these schools.

Having made the circuit, he returned to Ramah, the place of his residence; "for there was his house." Here he erected an altar to the Lord, and established the services of religion; for Shiloh had been deserted, and the Ark was kept at Kirjath-jearim for twenty years, until the deliverance of Israel from Philistine oppression. To the pious mind of Samuel, there was an intimate connection between religion and the best interests of society. Where the regular services of religion were not enjoyed and appreciated, there was only a mock prosperity. Here Samuel, from time to time, received direct revelations from heaven, both because he was worthy of being entrusted with them, and because the times required them.

Samuel, however, becoming too old, his two sons, Joel and Abiah, were called to take his place. But, strange as

it is, they proved themselves unworthy of their trust. Though not so wicked as the sons of Eli, they were far from possessing that integrity and honesty which their office required. "They turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." There seems to be a tendency in the sons of public men to turn out bad. This may be owing to greater temptations, and to the want of time and attention being devoted to them by their parents. Samuel, perhaps, did not give that attention to his children which his father gave to him, and perhaps they had not such a mother as he had,—as Hannah was. Be this as it may, they walked not in the ways of their father, and the people complained. The elders of Israel, therefore, requested Samuel to select for them a king to govern them like other nations. Samuel was displeased at this request; for he knew, that unworthy judges might be displaced, and others called to govern, and the government be conducted in a more economical and prosperous manner, than if a king ruled them. He knew a kingly government would be more burdensome, and that if a king proved unworthy, he would have more power to abuse his authority, and be more difficult to remove from his place. However, he asked direction from the Lord. "And Samuel prayed unto the Lord." The Lord, however, was also displeased; for he preferred to govern them by judges, and he was displeased, because such a request showed a want of confidence in his providence, and an unwillingness to serve and obey him as their God. He said: "They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." However, he directed Samuel to comply with their request; but, at the same time, solemnly to protest that it was not for the best. "Hearken unto their voice; howbeit, yet protest solemnly unto them." Samuel accordingly enumerated the evils of a monarchy, particularly that it would have to be supported in luxury. "Nev-

ertheless, the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel ; and they said, Nay, but we will have a king over us." So the Lord gave them a king ; but it was in his wrath. Samuel promised to gratify their wish, and told the assembly to go to their homes : " Go ye every man to his city."

In due time, under the guidance of the Lord, Samuel presented them a king, which was Saul, a man of the tribe of Benjamin. By a variety of providential and miraculous circumstances, he was led to the selection of this man ; and having found him, he recommended him to the people for his tall and majestic appearance, which was indicative also of his superiority in the office he was about to assume. " And when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people, from the shoulders upward." From this circumstance, Samuel took occasion to speak in his behalf. " And Samuel said to all the people ; See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people ? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king."

It is remarkable that Samuel, whose influence was almost unbounded, and whose word could be depended upon in every emergency, took such a minute and active part in this business, and in all the affairs of the Israelites during the whole of his long life, when he had no interest to serve but the common good and the glory of God. Instead of seizing the reins of government and placing himself on a throne, and living in luxury and ease, and bestowing the crown on his descendants, he modestly retired only to counsel and advise, and to leave action to the more young and vigorous. He acted as a father with the most disinterested benevolence and patriotism.

Samuel on this occasion, having given the people a constitution founded on the principles of right and justice, which God had revealed, dismissed them and sent them

home. "Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house."

Soon after this Saul distinguished himself in battle, and obtained a victory over the Ammonites, and from this time all objectors to his reign were silenced; for some did not favor him at the beginning, even deriding Samuel for recommending him; for which conduct, many now advised the severe punishment of death. But Saul refused, saying: "There shall not a man be put to death this day: for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel." The venerable Samuel rejoiced; for he realized that "the counsel of the Lord shall stand."

Samuel announced an assembly at Gilgal for the public acknowledgment of Saul's reign. "Then said Samuel to the people: Come, let us go to Gilgal and renew the kingdom there." They accordingly went, and there they sacrificed peace offerings, and it is said, "Saul and the men of Israel rejoiced greatly." Samuel took this occasion to give the people a long discourse, advising them in a solemn and eloquent manner what to do. He introduced his speech by beseeching them to remember what he had done for them, and appealing to the sincerity and honesty of his life. "I have hearkened unto your voice," said he, "in all that ye said unto me, and have made a king over you." He was willing to accede to this mistaken wish of their's. "And now," said he, "I am old and grey-headed; and behold my sons are with you; and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day." "Witness against me," he says, "whom have I defrauded," &c. "And they said thou hast not defrauded us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man's hand." He then enumerates the mighty acts of God in their past history, from Moses down to that time. From

this history he shows them the unreasonableness of seeking protection and safety in a mere earthly king. "When the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us, when the Lord your God was your king." "Now," said he, "behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired." He then assures them if they and their king will fear and serve and not rebel against the Lord and his commandments, it shall be well with them: but if they obey not the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against them, as it was against their fathers. He then showed them the displeasure of God by calling down a miraculous thunderstorm. "Now, therefore," said he, "stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes." This greatly terrified them. "The people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel: And all the people said unto Samuel: Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." Samuel assured them, however, that they need not fear, provided they were faithful to their king and their God. He also assured them, that he would intercede for them at the throne of grace. "Moreover," said he, "as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way. Only fear the Lord, and serve him with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if you will do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king."

Saul, however, proved recreant to his trust. Although he wished to be good in the main, he gave loose reins to his impetuous and rash disposition, and his ambition and love of applause led him to be of a double mind, and to the commission of peccadilloes, or little sins, as he thought them to be.

There was a nation at this time, the Amalekites, whose wickedness had become so great, that forbearance and mercy toward them, were no longer a virtue. Accordingly, the Lord gave directions, through Samuel his prophet, to Saul to go against them and utterly destroy them for their wickedness and for an example to others. Saul, however, consented, by the request of his soldiers, to bring the king Agag, as a prisoner of war, to Gilgal, and also the sheep and oxen for sacrifice, in order, perhaps, to have a feast and a time of rejoicing. Thus, alas! the people and their king transgressed the command of God. When Samuel reproved him, Saul at first did not think that he had committed any sin. But he had violated the principles of justice and obedience; and when Samuel spoke to him in these searching words: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams, &c. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king,"—he confessed his sin. "I have sinned," he said, "because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice." He entreated for pardon, but it was not granted; for his repentance was, perhaps, not sincere; it was only on account of the loss of his kingdom, and not on account of his sin against God. At all events, God determined to remove him, and it is doubtful whether he was finally saved to enter the kingdom of heaven when he came to die; for he appeared to be a selfish character throughout. Though Samuel worshipped with him at this time, he returned home, and it is said, "Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death." His solicitude continued, however, and he "mourned for Saul." He remembered with sorrow, his hopes of good to Israel, which were blasted in Saul. He had anointed him, and watched with the deepest anxiety the progress of his reign. But

he had been compelled to bear this sorrowful message: "When thou wast little in thine own sight, thou wast made head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king. But thou didst not obey, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord." All was lost to Saul, and Samuel mourned for him, as for a fallen friend, with whom he had taken sweet counsel.

Samuel, however, lived to anoint another king. Soon after his return home from his last interview with Saul, he was called, by the Lord, from his retirement, to anoint David, a young shepherd of the village of Bethlehem, as king. It is said, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward;" whilst on the other hand, "The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." Between these two, there now commenced a rivalry, which providentially ended in the death of Saul in battle with the Philistines.

From this time we hear no more of Samuel until about four years after the anointing of David, when it is said: "He died: and all the Israelites were gathered together and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah." Thus he ended his career, full of years and full of honors, having lived during one of the most interesting and important periods of Jewish history, in which he figured conspicuously as an instrument in the hand of the Lord.

In the language of another, "Samuel was unquestionably a character of the very first class." During the troublesome times in which he lived, and amidst all the temptations to which he was exposed, from his childhood to old age, he never swerved from the rules of rectitude. This is remarkable, when we consider the fickleness of others around him, and can be accounted for only from the fact, that he was brought from his early childhood, to act for himself in the fear of God; and on the supposition that he was endowed

by nature and by grace with a sound mind and a pious heart.

He was a decided character. Amidst all the defections of Israel, he was always found on the side of the Lord, and he was always found to be right. Men knew where to find him, and they learned, in his subsequent history, to seek his aid and advice. He was a regular stand-by in times which tried men's souls.

From the preceding history, we also see, that *persons may live in the Church, without being of the Church;* that they may enjoy many of her covenant advantages without obtaining a change of heart.

Hophni and Phinehas enjoyed all the advantages of Samuel. They enjoyed the same means of grace. They were circumcised, and more than that, they were brought up under the very eye of Jehovah, and of a pious parent. "They ministered before the Lord," in his sanctuary; but they did not become pious. This can be accounted for only on the supposition, that they did not suffer themselves to be brought up in the way in which they should go. They did not yield themselves, like Samuel, to the instruction and guidance of the Lord.

Thus, at the present day, many enjoy the benefits of baptism and religious instruction, who do not receive them as coming from the Lord, and do not yield themselves to the influence of the Spirit and of their own consciences. There is no way of forming a perfect Christian character but by acting for one's self according to the dictates of conscience and the guidance of the Spirit and truth of God.

Samuel was, in many respects, a type of our Saviour. At all events he resembled him in his character and in the position he occupied, and the influence he exerted. Of Jesus it was said, when a child, "this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." This was also eminentl

true of Samuel. He saw, and was the instrument of announcing, and, to some extent, of bringing about the fall of Eli and his family, and the fall of the Israelites in battle with the Philistines, and the rising of Saul and of the Israelites again, and the fall, in substance, of Saul and the elevation of David to the throne of Israel. It seems, that the history of Samuel suggested to the pious Simeon the expression in reference to Christ: "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." As Samuel was the prophet and priest in whom was lodged the power of announcing, entreating and executing the will of God, so, in a more eminent degree, was lodged in Christ the power to influence and direct the Church and the world's history—to "overturn and overturn until he, whose right it is, shall reign."

The integrity of Samuel was irreproachable. He was honest toward his God and toward men. During his long life, it could not be laid to his charge, that he was ever guilty of treachery. His friendship was honest and sincere. And this sincerity commenced with his childhood when he "ministered before the Lord." His sincerity and honesty led him to be faithful in his friendship; for while he loved his friend, he also reproved sin upon him, and though he pronounced the judgments of God, he cherished the feeling of friendship toward those who erred, and could say with the Saviour, "Father, forgive them." He mourned for Saul, as Christ mourned over Jerusalem.

His fortitude was undaunted. He possessed heroic moral courage, and no difficulties or dangers led him to despair. When all Israel seemed to depart from God, and he was almost left alone, his courage failed not. Though gentle, he was yet firm and unyielding in his adherence to what he was convinced was the good and right way. Though meek as the Lamb Jesus, he was also bold as the lion of the tribe of Judah—the Lord Jesus.

His zeal was unabating. He was zealous for the honor of God, and his zeal knew no abatement. His whole heart was enlisted in the cause of the God of truth, and he vindicated that cause to the last, amid the greatest opposition, and in the most degenerate times. He honored God and practiced the rigid virtues of a prophet; and God honored him in the sight of the people who regarded him with the sober second thought. What the Lord said to Eli, he fulfilled to Samuel: "Them that honor me I will honor." As a judge he never swerved from his duty, but performed it with zeal and impartiality.

His piety was unaffected and unblemished. He was above ostentation or display, and never trumpeted his own praise. Unambitious of distinction, he was only solicitous of showing forth the praises of Him whose instrument he was, knowing that a virtuous life was the most desirable thing in itself, and most lovely in the sight of God.

In most of the other Old Testament saints there was some blemish of character; but in Samuel's piety there appears no defect. Though of course not perfect, he was yet so pure in his piety that it could almost be said of him, as it was of the Saviour: "He did no sin." As a prophet he was holy, and eminently useful in diffusing the knowledge of the true God to the end of his life.

Holy blessed Samuel! We here bid adieu to the theme of his life in Palestine, hoping to meet him in a better clime.

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

II.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MARY, THE SISTER OF LAZARUS.

There were several persons in the village of Bethany, whom our divine and adorable Redeemer made his intimate friends, and with whom he tarried when he made his visits to the yearly festivals at Jerusalem, and on other occasions. These were particularly the family of Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, and of Simon the leper, who, perhaps, also had been a Pharisee. These friends were endeared to the Saviour by religious associations, and other social and providential incidents.

In his last visit to Jerusalem, the Saviour received an act of attention, friendship and love from Mary, which he recommends and enjoins to be mentioned as a memorial of her, wherever the gospel should be preached or promulgated. Accordingly, we propose giving a brief sketch of this noble deed and of others, of this truly pious woman, for the consideration and benefit of the church-member.

The first direct account we have of this Mary—for there are several Marys spoken of in the New Testament—is that on the occasion of a visit from Jesus, when, it is said, she sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word. We shall take this incident, therefore, as the first in her history, and proceed to make some observations upon it.

It seems, upon this visit a conversation was entered into, by those who were present in the house of Martha and Mary, with the Saviour, in the course of which something was said that called forth a continued discourse from him on the subject of religion. Mary was so interested and chained

with the charm of his words, that she remained and listened so long as to neglect her household duties. She "sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word." We observe in this, that the Saviour, that heavenly minister, made this a real pastoral visit, by giving religious instruction, and dropping pious remarks in his conversation. Martha, however, who, it appears, was the governess of the house, was busily engaged in preparing refreshments and other comforts for the Saviour and his companions—which was all very good in its place—and seeing the remissness of her sister, complained to her distinguished guest. She was cumbered with much serving, and said: "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her, therefore, that she help me."

Although there was something commendable in the conduct of Martha, in that it showed her respect and veneration for Christ, as well as her industry, by endeavoring to provide the best entertainment for him; there was also something reprehensible in it, in that it manifested too much concern, producing fretfulness and dissatisfaction. She should rather have been patient, and have heard the discourse of the Saviour—the more important moral and religious truths which fell from his lips—than to exert herself to "have a sumptuous and splendid entertainment; great plenty, great variety and great exactness, according to the fashion of the times."

The Saviour, perceiving that she indulged a rather worldly and impious spirit, gave her a gentle reproof: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things." He was displeased, that she should think of pleasing him chiefly by preparing a rich and splendid entertainment, and by perplexing herself about it, to the neglect of "the one thing needful."

Hence he said: "But one thing is needful, and Mary

hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." It is well to be diligent in business, to be a fine housekeeper; but it is still better to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, to be pious and to seek the one thing needful above all others. "That is always best for us upon the whole, which is best for our souls."

In this instance, the first occurrence mentioned in her history, the piety of Mary is distinguished for its affectionateness. She loved much. Martha was conscientious and strict in her way; but there was too much of that erring humanity mingled with her piety, which looks more on the human side of things, than on the divine and heavenly. We may also observe, in this "scrap of history," the error of those heads of families who cannot find time to collect their household, when the minister visits them, in order that he may address them and engage in prayer with and for them.

We have reason to believe, that this happy family of Bethany, was visited frequently by the Saviour. A sad calamity, however, befel them at a time when Jesus was far from Jerusalem, on one of his journeys through the land of Palestine, to preach the gospel and to work miracles. Lazarus, the only male member of the family, was sick. His sisters sent their friend Jesus, who was none other than the long promised Messiah and Redeemer of the world, intelligence of their brother's illness. Their simple and affectionate message was: "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick." There was a peculiar attachment between Jesus and this family; for it is said: "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." When the Saviour received this news, he immediately determined, by means of his omniscience and divine power, to employ this circumstance for the glory of God. "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

Several days after this announcement, Jesus, now know-

ing that his friend was dead, and telling his disciples plainly, "Lazarus is dead," departed for Bethany. When he came near the village, Martha, perhaps hearing of his approach, and being of an active and busy turn, went out, without informing her sister, to meet Jesus; and when she came to where he was, she expostulated with him for not coming sooner, and lamenting that he was not present: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." While this interview was had, "Mary sat still in the house." It appears that she was of a contemplative and reserved, and somewhat melancholy disposition, and this caused her to remain in the house, brooding over her sorrows and bereavement. Martha, however, soon returned, and said: "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." Jesus was inquisitive about Mary, knowing her piety and natural disposition, and desiring to give her such consolation as he gave Martha, and to mingle his sympathies with hers; for his sympathies were affected, on this occasion, in a powerful manner, in view of the sorrows of his friends, and in view of the sad and common lot of all humanity. He himself was near his death, and he knew it; for not many days afterward he was crucified and buried, and consequently, a crowd of thoughts came rushing into his mind and a weight of solicitude and sorrow was experienced in view of the sins of mankind, which quite overcame him; for when he came to the grave of Lazarus he groaned in spirit and wept. Yes, Jesus wept; for he had a heart full of sympathy for fallen humanity. His sympathy was, to some extent of course, human and natural; but it was also divine.

"The Master is come and calleth for thee." This was welcome news to Mary, and, accordingly, with a sorrowful heart, which only those know who are bereaved of friends, she hastened to appear before Jesus. "As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to him." She loved the

Saviour as her friend and Redeemer, and desired his words of condolence, and to pour her sorrows into his ear. She knew, that he had almighty power, and could give her that consolation which her other friends could not. She was a woman of a sorrowful and tender spirit. This was her natural temper, and when she went out of the house, those present with her supposed that she was going to the grave to weep there. She was naturally susceptible of impression, and the more so by grace, which properly directed and controled her excitable and tender spirit. When she came to where Jesus was, she fell down at his feet, and, like Martha, said: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Her earnest spirit and strong passions led her, not only to go to Jesus, but to fall at his feet. This was an affecting scene. The longings for immortality, and the deep spiritual wants of humanity found access to the heart of Jesus in the days of his flesh, by the expressions of these his dearest and most intimate friends on earth.

What is remarkable on this occasion, is, that Mary again appears as the confiding and loving follower of Christ. Her faith led her to the feet of Jesus, to confide her all to his hands, and needed not any argument to remove dark doubts, and murmurings against providence and divine government. "Though Christ seemed unkind in delaying to come to them, she could take nothing amiss from him; she still loved much." She merely said, "Lord, hadst thou been here, my brother had not died." And, doubtless, she received that comfort which the world cannot give.

The next incident in the life of Mary, is that of her pouring ointment on the Saviour's feet and head, as he was at supper in the house of Simon the leper, on the occasion of his last visit to Jerusalem, six days before his death, when he tarried, as usual, with his friends in Bethany, which was a village in the suburbs of the city. Matthew and Mark

relate this circumstance, without mentioning the name of Mary. They only speak of the act as that of a certain woman. "There came unto him a woman having an alabaster-box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat." And in addition to what John says, they relate the injunction of the Saviour, that this act of the woman should be spoken of, as a memorial of her, in the world, wherever the gospel should be preached. We may observe from this, that persons become distinguished, not by their name and family descent, nor by the circumstances in which they are placed, merely, but by their minds and actions. A name becomes honorable, only by being accompanied with honorable conduct.

There is another act, of a similar kind with the one just alluded to, spoken of by Luke, in the seventh chapter of his gospel, performed by a woman, without her name being mentioned. Whether it was Mary or not, cannot be decided from the gospel narrative; but it is certain, that she was a woman of similar piety with Mary. Like Mary, she anointed the Saviour's feet; and besides this, also washed them with her tears. This was a customary act of kindness, which the master of the house attended to, or saw that it was attended to by his servants or others, towards those of his guests, to whom he wished to show a mark of distinction, and manifest great love and respect. It seems also to have been performed voluntarily, by strangers in the house, toward their distinguished friends, as in this instance of Mary and that of the woman in the Pharisee's house. Thus, like these pious women, we may still show love and respect to our Saviour, by doing acts of kindness to his people —by promoting the comfort and happiness of his followers and his ministers. We should do a real service, in the way of hospitality or otherwise, whenever we have opportunity; and we should do such things as unto the Lord. The love of Christ should constrain us to act thus.

Six days before the passover, at which latter time he partook of the last supper with his disciples, and instituted it as the permanent sacrament of his presence and sufferings on earth, the Saviour was in the house of Simon the leper, at supper, when Mary, as it is said in John, "took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment." Mary's benevolent disposition was shown, in this instance, to have been equal, if not superior to that of Martha, in bestowing favors and showing kindness to the Saviour. She gave the best she had, "very costly ointment;" whilst it is certain, that her benevolence was not of that forced and earthly character, which Martha manifested on a former occasion, in extending the hospitalities of her house.

Mary's heart being moved to a generous love for the Saviour, she did not hesitate to incur expense to show her love. She bestowed "very costly ointment" upon the Saviour's person. It is the act which shows the benevolent heart, that is most acceptable. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." There are times, in the history of every individual, when affection and sympathy are more acceptable than the richest gifts. What the Saviour of mankind wants is the homage and affection of men. This is worth more to him than thousands of gold and silver. Where this exists, the heart, like that of Mary's, will not stop at expense in religion. It will not be satisfied with an "easy and cheap religion;" but the person who possesses it will long to cast himself at Jesus' feet, to consecrate to him his best affections, with all he has and is.

But one of Jesus' disciples—Judas Iscariot—objected to this lavish expenditure, as he considered it; and perhaps some others thought his criticism on Mary's act of love, at first, to be just. But the Saviour corrected it. John re-

lates the event, in reference to Judas, as follows: "Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him: 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?' This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus: Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this; for the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always."

Judas was self-deceived, if not a wilful hypocrite. He flattered himself, or endeavored to flatter others, that he was benevolent and loved the poor. But in his heart, if it had been brought to the test, he would have seen that he did not care for the poor. His objection did not proceed from a principle of charity. He did not care for the poor, any further than he could make use of them in accomplishing his own ends, by being their overseer. He secretly wanted the money himself, as was proven by his afterward selling his Master for thirty pieces of silver. Thus it often is, that those who oppose the liberal support of the institutions of religion, and the benevolent operations of the Church, on pretence that they, or their friends are too poor to do it, not because they or those upon whom they wish to bestow their money, are really in want, but because they wish to lavish it upon themselves. They may even say: Come, see my zeal for the poor, while, at the same time, they are not concerned whether the true interests of the poor, and of the Church sink or swim, only so that they advance themselves.

"Let her alone," said the Saviour of Mary, "against the day of my burying hath she kept this." Though it may seem to be, in itself, no wise or prudent act, it was excusable at least; for it was well intentioned. Even allowing it to have been an unnecessary expenditure, Christ

would not discourage her honest endeavors to do him a service. He accepted her kindness, and received this expression of her good will with pleasure. It is the honesty of intention of pious people, which Christ approves. He looks at the heart.

"Against the day of my burying hath she kept this." Christ was aware, that his death was near at hand, and perhaps had given Mary, as well as his other disciples, intimations of it. Hence the conduct of Mary in anointing him. At least, in a pleasant and friendly way, he puts a favorable construction upon what she did. Thus "Christ puts kind comments on the pious words and actions of good people, and not only makes the best of what is amiss, but makes the most of what is good."

But, not only does the Saviour excuse the conduct of Mary on this occasion, he highly commends it. In Matthew it is recorded, that he said: "Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me." And in Mark's account of the same transaction, he is represented as saying also: "She hath done what she could; she has come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying." As before observed, Jesus was sensible that his hour was near at hand; and as it approached, he thought much upon it. He thus suffered his death a thousand times by anticipation, whilst at the same time, the sight of a world lying in wickedness, for whom he was enduring all the privations and sufferings of a painful life in the midst of sinful men, was fully before him, and filled his soul with unutterable sorrow and anguish. He was soon to be crucified by those whom he would fain have saved; and, in this situation he was very sensible to kindness, and to affectionate remembrance in reference to the object of his mission particularly. He was susceptible as man, as well as God; for he had all the sympathies of our nature.

Mary not only performed an inoffensive and well meant act of kindness; but, perhaps the very best, and most gratefully acceptable service in the circumstances, that could be performed. "She hath done what she could." How well the little trivial acts of kindness show the benevolent heart, is understood by all. Here is an act of kindness performed by Mary, proceeding from the spontaneous flow of her affections; and not only an act of kindness, but one which takes the character of religious reverence and respect—of devotion and faith. It offers a rich gift, beautifully significant of the best offerings of a devout heart. Like the gifts of the wise men, at the Saviour's birth, which were gold, frankincense and myrrh; the gift of this woman was an act of faith in him, who could raise the dead, and who was himself soon to die and rise again from the dead. "She hath kept this ointment against the day of my burying," said the Saviour. She hath done this in reference to my death. "She hath done what she could." She has done the best thing that could be done in my circumstances.

"The house was filled with the odor of the ointment." The perfumes of it rose up and filled the dwelling. It came to Jesus, with all the associations of his past life of toil and suffering—with the recollection of the kindnesses and love of those, who were then present, and with the anticipation of his death and the object of it, as well as with the sincere and voluntary devotion, and unaffected love of her who offered it. "The poor always ye have with you," said Jesus, "but me ye have not always." I will soon go away, and "whither I go ye cannot come." This honor, therefore, of anointing my body, on this interesting occasion, surrounded by my friends in the house of Simon the leper, can be enjoyed but once. "The poor always ye have with you, but me ye have not always:" not always in the body, and in these circumstances. Therefore, "let the woman alone;

she hath done what she could." If we do as well as we can, provided our heart is right, provided we have faith and love, we will be accepted.

The value of this act of Mary's, consisted in that it could be performed but once, in those circumstances, upon the body of Jesus; and in its being performed entirely voluntarily, not forced or grudgingly, and with sincere love. The act had those qualities and characteristics, which showed, that the interests of the poor, and of the Church, would not suffer in the hands of such persons as this woman. Hence we see the propriety and force of the command, enjoining the honorable mention of the act through all posterity in the Church. "Verily I say unto you: Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."

"We here bid adieu to Mary's history, for the present, with the hope that the savor of her piety may remain with all the followers of Christ, and that they may imitate her piety, and become, in turn, "an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor."

III.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ULRIC ZWINGLE.

Zwingle's connection with the origin of the German Reformed Church, and the part he acted in the great Reformation of the sixteenth century, as well as the influence which he exerted by his example, his labors and his doctrines upon the religious thinking and practice of the protestant portion of the Church during his life, and subsequent to his death, entitles his name and his deeds to a prominent place in history. The very fact of his being a native of Switzerland—the land of William Tell—in which he lived, and labored, and died, should enlist our attention and call forth our interest in his history; for, although Switzerland is but a small principality, compared with the kingdoms of Europe, it has preserved its existence as a republic for so long a time, and in such a manner, as to command the respect of mankind, and as to show, that a more than common energy and genius rule in the people of that celebrated country. There the republic of Switzerland stands, durable as its hills and mountains, and firm as the rock-bound shores of its lakes and rivers, a fit emblem of the strength and durability of the Christian Church.

Ulric Zwingle was born at Wildhaus, a village near the lake of Zurich in the county of Tockenburg, on the 1st of January, 1484. He was of respectable parentage. His father was highly esteemed by his fellow citizens, who conferred on him the office of chief magistrate of the district. His uncle, Bartholomew Zwingle, was selected pastor of the church at Wildhaus, which, about this time, was disconnected from the parent church at Garns and constituted a separate parish.

Zwingle gave early evidence of talent. This was more fully developed as he advanced in his studies in the several schools which he attended. He was first sent to school under the care of his uncle at Wesen, where he continued until he was about ten years of age, when he was sent to Basel, under the care of the amiable and excellent teacher, Gregorious Bingli. Here he made such astonishing progress, as to make himself the object of remark and notice. There is one thing which appears evident, while he remained at this school, and that is, his studiousness and energy. As a pupil, he evidently applied himself diligently to his studies. Perhaps, while others less gifted and pious than himself, squandered their precious time in idleness and sin, he satisfied his thirst for knowledge by industrious study and prayer. But like Samuel, the prophet of old, his virtue and superior progress exposed him to the envy and ill-treatment of his fellow students; so much so, that he was obliged to leave the school.

Zwingle was not of a disposition to brook insults and injuries without reproving them, if not for his own sake, at least for the sake of those who were guilty of them, and for the sake of the cause of truth and justice. Thus early, Zwingle gave evidence of his destiny as a reformer of morals and religion, by not suffering sin upon his fellows without reproof. He lived in warlike and contentious times, and came to intellectual consciousness when men began to wake up from the religious formalism and errors which had accumulated upon them for centuries; but he was also endowed by nature with a warlike disposition, and a moral earnestness, such as was necessary to a reformer, which would not tamely submit to injustice and error, but would rather reprove them wherever they were found.

His amiable teacher was deeply interested in him; but owing to the ill-will of his fellow students, Mr. Bingli ad-

vised his father, after the warmest recommendations, to place him at an institution which afforded higher instructions than his own. Accordingly, he was sent to Bern, and placed under the tuition of Henry Lupulus, who was the first individual that opened a school for classical education in Switzerland. In this academy Zwingle stored his mind richly with all kinds of literary knowledge, and here he formed his taste and judgment and his style of composition as a scholar. Lupulus, his tutor, although at this time a rigid papist, afterward became his firm friend and a promoter of the Reformation. He outlived his pupil and honored his memory with an epitaph in verse.

Having remained two years at Bern, he was sent to Vienna to study philosophy—the system of argumentation and of the explanation of the causes and consequences of things—which was then taught in the schools. This was a very difficult study, the more so because it was carried into useless and ridiculous distinctions. One of his historians says, "It was happy for him, that he did not apply himself to this study until he had been exercised six years under eminent teachers, in acquiring a knowledge of language, and had formed an acquaintance with the master pieces of Rome, by which he was secured against the loss of his common sense in those cobwebs of scholastic systems, which were then called philosophy." However, there was some benefit in them, because they trained the mind to habits of close thinking, and qualified a man to become a logician and public disputer.

Zwingle, who, it seems, was designed by his father and his uncle for the ministry, was now sent to Basel, where he studied theology under Thomas Wittenbach. Under the tuition of this man, who was every way worthy of his post, and whom Zwingle afterward regarded with the greatest respect, his religious life and theological training were ma-

tured, and he was prepared to enter on the field of battle as Christ's soldier in the ministry. Whilst pursuing his studies in theology, he united the labors of a student with those of a teacher, by giving instruction in languages in a primary school of Basel, (St. Martin's,) thereby supplying himself with the means of subsistence and relieving his father of much of the expense of his education.

We are not informed what the exercises of his mind were, during this period, on the subject of religion, any further than that he regarded his instructor, the pious Wittenbach, with the greatest reverence and affection, for his valuable instructions in theology. This continued to the end of his life. Zwingle maintained a correspondence with his venerated professor, and was often strengthened by his counsels in the time of his own conflicts.

Zwingle, having spent four years at Basel, the time now arrived for his ordination to the priesthood. He preached first at Rapperswyll, in the Canton of Zurich, and soon after received priests orders, according to the custom of the Catholic Church. The Canton of Zurich witnessed his first efforts, and also his last, in behalf of his divine master. There he ended his ministry when he accompanied his fellow citizens and church-members to the battle field of Cappel, as their chief chaplain, to pray with and advise them in obedience to the custom of the times.

In one of the mountainous districts, (Glarus) whose industrious and honest citizens enjoyed the privilege of chosing their own pastor, a priest in Israel had fallen. He was perhaps saved from the conflicts which were coming on, to make room for one who was more eminently fitted to meet the demands of the times, and to make Glarus the first honored theatre of action for one who should be set for the fall and rising again of many. Providence directed them to the man whose birth-place was Wildhaus in Tockenburg.

His uncle Bartholomew, perhaps, was the instrument in the hands of God of making Zwingle known to the Glareans, inasmuch as the city of Wesen was previously the market for the people of Glarus.

He was chosen and ordained by the bishop of Constance in despite of another appointment by the pope. To this individual who brought his certificate of appointment by the pope, he and the congregation were obliged to pay an annual pension for the relinquishment of his right to the charge. This circumstance, perhaps already with others, gave Zwingle some misgivings as to the power of the pope and the manner in which he lorded it over God's heritage.

Zwingle repaired to his charge, and entered upon the duties of his office, 1506 ; and now the clear and penetrating eye of the pastor, with a benignant countenance, and yet expressive of firmness and courage, and with the ardor of one who has been in his study and upon his knees in prayer to God, is seen to make a powerful impression on his hearers. His friend, Myconius says : "He becomes a priest, and now, contrary to the usual way of priests, he yields himself wholly to his studies, especially to that of theology. Now he first rightly apprehends how much he, who is intrusted with the instruction of the people in divine truth, ought himself to know ; how he ought himself before all things, to be furnished with theological knowledge, and then to possess eloquence also, that he may be enabled to exhibit every thing both truly and profitably, agreeably to the capacities of his hearers. To these studies he applied himself with a diligence of which there had been no previous example in many years ; as also none, even of the best speakers of our times, was so complete a master of oratory. He was, however, not in Cicero's manner ; he would not express himself exactly in accordance with the rules of the ancients, but freely, in the manner best suited to his times,

and to the people within his sphere of action ; and thus he succeeded with us, as did Tully with those of his own times."

Zwingle's ardent mind and longing desire to promote whatever was really good in the moral and religious condition of the people, induced him to press upon the attention of his parishoners the duty of cultivating holiness. It was through the mind and heart that men had communion with God, and by exercising their minds and hearts in contemplation and faith upon things which are heavenly and divine in their nature, the generous impulses of the soul were awakened, and the principles of virtue were established. He held up the holiness of the lives of the saints rather than their merits as intercessors, and rather than the efficacy of their bones as relics by which to propitiate the favor of heaven. His communion with the written word of Scripture, and with the writings of the fathers in the early ages of the Church, particularly Augustine, brought him to feel most sensibly, that nothing but an earnest mind, taking hold of the truth as it is in Jesus, and understanding it, could direct the soul in the path of heavenly virtue. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." Hence he said nothing about the merit of pilgrimages to particular places, where the bones of some saint were said to be deposited, nor about the glory and intercession of the Virgin Mary.

Myconius says again, of his ministry : "In the mean time, he so promulgated the grace of the gospel, that he made no mention, or very sparingly, of the abuses of the Church of Rome. He wished the truth, when known, to do its own work in the hearts of the hearers ; for when truth is perceived and understood, we easily discover what is false. The times, however, did not then permit him to act otherwise; for amidst such an untowardness and wickedness of men, it was more likely that the truth would perish, than that the abuses of religion would be removed." 29*

Zwingle was of a heavenly mind, and his ardent and chief desire was to promote the cause of religion. With this mind, he supposed that it was only necessary to build on the true foundation, which is Christ, in his connection with the *Roman* Catholic Church. He had no thought, as yet, of denying the supreme power of the pope, and that it would be necessary for him to protest against some things that would bring him into collision with the papacy, and finally compel him to separate himself from the ecclesiastical rule of the bishop of Rome.

But the time was now at hand, when his eyes should be opened. The first thing which shocked his moral sense or conscience, and opened his eyes to the spiritual wickedness in the high places in the Church, as well as in the State and throughout society in all its ranks, was the custom of Switzerland going, as hired soldiery, to foreign countries, and among others to the dominions of the pope to assist them in their wars with each other. This custom was unjust in principle, and led to the most degrading wickedness among the soldiers and the people. This was brought the more clearly before the eyes of Zwingle, because he was three times present as chaplain in these foreign wars. The first campaign in which he was present, was that of 1512, in which the Swiss were hired by the pope, partly with money, and partly by proclaiming indulgence to all who would favor his cause, making it appear that it was the cause of the Church and of religion, when it was in reality, only to support his temporal power in Italy. A likely successor to Christ, this! He was in direct contradiction to the sentiment of the Saviour: "My kingdom is not of this world." But so it was. The people, under the web of errors which had been brought upon them, were blind to the unlawful assumptions of the pope. Accordingly they repaired to his standard on this occasion, in great numbers. The pope, assisted by Venice

and Spain, was at war with France for the possession of the duchy of Milan. The king of France had solicited a force of several thousand men from the Swiss for the first campaign, but they demanded large sums of money and consequently were not employed.

The French, however, proved victorious in this campaign, at the battle of Ravenna, and after this felt so confident of final success, that they turned away from the Swiss with contempt. The latter, enraged at this affront, were the more ready to enlist with the pope, who sent emissaries into Switzerland, to stimulate the enlistment of troops, and, in a short time, twenty thousand men were prepared to march.

At Verona, in Italy, they were met and received in great splendor and pomp by Cardinal Shinner, who had previously been in Switzerland, to hasten their preparation and departure. Presents were presented from the holy father. These were a consecrated ducal hat, with an image of the Holy Ghost made of gold, in the form of a dove, and a consecrated golden sword adorned with precious stones. Very inappropriate emblems, to say the least, to come from a representative of Jesus Christ. He was certainly not harmless as a dove, nor wise as a serpent, when he assumed the character of an earthly king, and took the reins of state government into his own hands. He was in direct opposition to Him, who said to Peter: "Put up thy sword again into its place;" and to Peter himself, who said: "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." It is evidently contrary to the spirit and design of Christianity, that it should be made to assume the place of a State or civil government. There should indeed be a connection between the Church and State; but it should be of such a character as to leave each one to act in its own sphere. The Church should influence the

State by moral suasion, and in this way it is perfectly right that she should teach from the pulpit the principles which should guide our rulers, perfectly right that she should inculcate upon governments the fundamental principles of religion and morality, and that she should remonstrate against any action which does violence to these fundamental principles of justice and truth, and which may justly incur the displeasure of Him, who controls the destinies of nations, and who will visit national sins with national punishments. On the other hand, it is the duty of the State to protect the Church in her rights and in the exercise of her religious functions, but not to control and govern the Church in her own affairs, by civil enactments, nor to control the conduct of individuals in a religious respect, unless such conduct militates against the peace and good order of society by resulting in crime, as in the case of the Anabaptists of Switzerland and the Mormons of America.

The Swiss, however, in the time of which we are writing, had no thought but that they were doing God service by fighting sanguinary battles under the banner of the pope. Their ardor was inflamed by the idea of being engaged in the defence of religion and the Church. They were victorious. The French were beaten in every direction, and the Swiss were honored by the pope with the title of *Protectors of the Liberties of the Church.*

One of the cantons, however, Bern, remained in the interest of France, but sent no troops into this campaign. It may seem to be a very wrong step for Zwingle, as well as other ministers, to accompany the military into these campaigns ; but, it must be remembered, that it was the ancient and established custom of the cantons, for the pastor of the principal church, and sometimes several pastors, to become the chaplains of the army when it took the field. There was a benefit in this custom, not only in affording

comfort and instruction to the sick and the dying, but in promoting and preserving virtue and religion in the minds of the soldiery. In this way, the evil influences of the camp and the field were, to some extent, counteracted and the soldiery were at least kept from greater moral putrefaction. Sentiments of pure patriotism and religion were preserved, where otherwise they probably would have entirely disappeared. Zwingle, by being thus brought into Italy, was enabled to see more clearly the corruption of morals and religion in the Church, and was thus gradually brought to feel the necessity of a reformation. Luther had his feelings shocked by observing the low standard of piety at Rome. Zwingle had occasion to see the imperfections of the Church in the same vicinity. It was a good and wise providence, which thus brought these two men into Italy to behold the unholy state of the Church, where it ought to have been the purest.

There was another expedition into Italy in 1513, at which Zwingle was present. During this expedition, the Swiss obtained the splendid victory of Navarre, over a greatly superior French force; but the glory of it was tarnished by the conduct of the leaders of the army and also of the soldiery. Their leaders deprived them of their portion of the spoils, and the troops arose in mutiny against their officers; all discipline ceased, and they dispersed themselves over the country, exacting a forced compensation for their services from the people, whom they had saved by their valor. A great excitement was the consequence, throughout Switzerland generally, against the corruption in high places, and the treachery of the military chiefs. But the guilty parties succeeded in appeasing this excitement, and a third expedition was undertaken in 1515.

On this occasion a large army from all the cantons, stationed at the base of the mountains bordering on France,

awaited the approach of the army of the king of France, which was more formidable than any that had preceded it. But jealousies existing in the Swiss army, owing to previous disappointments and to the known treachery of some of the leaders, there was no union and concert among them. The king of France, learning this fact, increased the discord by his emissaries with whom he sent money and promises to buy over the discontented chiefs. He succeeded to some extent, and a large portion of the Swiss entered into a treaty with him, regardless of their brethren, and retired from the contest. The remainder, however, urged by cardinal Shinner, to redeem their ancient glory, engaged in battle with the enemy on the plains of Marignan. The battle continued two days, Zwingle being with the Glareans, who remained faithful to their promises to the duke and the pope, and engaged in the battle. On the first day the Swiss were victorious; but on the second day they were routed with a terrible slaughter by the superior force of the French. Above five thousand Swiss were left dead on the field, and among these the noblest and bravest in the land.

It was enough for Zwingle. This was his last campaign into Italy. He saw the evil and raised his voice against it. He was sick at heart and disgusted, not only with the dissolute and vicious life of the camp, which they well know is bad at best who have experienced it; but with the whole proceeding and the cause in which they were engaged and its consequences on the nation. Had it been a just cause in which they were engaged, he might have excused many things; but the whole custom and the objects had in view were altogether unjustifiable. He here saw the perfidious arts of the pope, who ought to have been the supporter of peace and piety, and of princes who should have ruled in righteousness, as well as the corrupting influences of a mil-

itary life, and especially of such an one as that to which the mercenary service of the Swiss led. The poor soldiers returned home with vices contracted in the army, which rendered them worthless as citizens, and a bad example to the community to which they returned.

But we will let Zwingle himself speak on this subject, to show how he regarded it, and to show the mind and heart of the reformer at this period of his life. In a letter to the canton of Schweitz, he argued forcibly against the evils referred to. The pope and his emissaries, said he, pretend, "that it is unworthy of men so robust and valiant as the Swiss, to spend their strength in cultivating barren rocks; that they have only to enlist under the banner of some foreign prince, and they will soon be laden with riches and honor. Nothing can be more false than such promises. Remember the words of the Saviour, 'You shall know them by their fruits; do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?' They have no object but their own interest, or that of the powers who hire them; they abuse your simplicity; they expose you to a thousand evils, and gratify the ambition and tyranny of princes, at the expense of your labors, your dangers, your blood. It would not have cost you so much to defend your substance, your country, your wives, and your children, as you every day squander in the service of strangers. Think how many of your fellow citizens have perished in the wars of Naples, in the battles of Navarre and Milan. What rivers of blood have you not shed! What would you say, were you to see the mercenary soldier, hired with gold, whom you had never injured, appearing at your gates, felling your woods, destroying your vines, carrying off your flocks, massacreing your children, violating your maidens, unaffected by the tears of your wives and your fathers, butchering them before your eyes, and setting fire to your dwellings? Would you not

call for fire from heaven to fall on them? and if you were not heard, be tempted to believe that there is no God? Yet this is what yourselves do, allured by the charm of riches, and property unjustly acquired.

Those who plead for this system, say that war is an instrument of punishment in the hand of God, and that God must employ for this purpose the ministry of men. It is true; but do you not remember this saying of Christ, "Woe to him by whom the offence cometh!" woe to them who, without call, become the instrument of divine vengeance; for after having employed them in the punishment of others, God often punishes them in their turn. But, add these interested advocates, the wars in which we engage are just; they are intended to bring rebels to obedience. If they were always thus directed, nothing could be more reasonable; but in general they are undertaken in support of the tyranny, the gratification of the avarice, or the satisfaction of the boundless ambition of princes: and of what princes? Of those who ought to rule their subjects by persuasion only, of those who ought to set an example of justice and moderation, of the *pope, bishops and abbeys*.

But what! say the partizans of foreign powers, our country cannot support its inhabitants; we are forced to leave it and seek subsistence in other lands. It is true, it cannot support a luxury which is never satisfied, or an unbounded love of pleasure. But never was there a country more able to support a laborious, modest, and sober people. A moment's attention to the fertility of its plains, and the abundance of its fruits, may convince us of this; but you despise common blessings; you allow yourselves to be deluded by the promises of men who wish your ruin.

Need I speak of the fatal effects, which our wars daily produce among us? Of the perpetual violation of justice, the contempt of the laws, and insubordination carried to

such a height, that scarcely a single citizen can be found who respects his magistrates? Need I speak of the corruption of manners which our warriors bring back with them, of the jealousy and envy, inseparable companions of the favors with which our neighbors pay for the blood of our children; passions which expose the independence of our common country to the utmost danger? Oh! if you still have any care of your ancient glory; if you yet remember your forefathers and the dangers they braved for the defence of their liberty; if the welfare of your country is dear to you, reject the fatal gifts of aspiring princes, reject them before it is too late; suffer yourselves neither to be deceived by the promises of some, nor intimidated by the menaces of others. I know that I shall draw down on myself the indignation of formidable enemies; but I will not, on this account, be silent. I condemn your agreement with the pope, whom you have furnished with troops, because it is my duty to condemn it. You rob yourselves of your natural security by losing your best troops, and expose yourselves to the power of your enemies, and after having served to gratify their ambition and their avarice, you run the risk of becoming also their victims."

These eloquent arguments of Zwingle found access to the hearts of the people, and the practices which they denounce were in a great measure abandoned; and though he created bitter enemies to himself, by opposing the system of foreign service in which many were interested, because it filled their coffers with money; yet the greater portion of these enemies subsequently became his friends, when they saw the honesty of his heart, and reflected on the justice of his arguments. "Virtue itself is hated when it steps in a bad man's path; but there is that in it, and there is that in his own nature, which compels him to respect it; and when his passions are not aroused, and his reason is suffered to rule,

he bows spontaneously before men whom he once hated or affected to despise."

It has been objected to Zwingle, that he took too great a part in politics, and that he undertook the removal of social and political evils first, thus beginning at the wrong end. Without pretending to say that he was free from all imprudence,—for he would be more than human if he were —we cannot but think that he did not come far from the mark, when he denounced the immoral practices of the government, which left a blight on society throughout his beloved country. Would not an American, even at the present day, raise his voice against an evil which was bringing ruin on his country in a moral and religious respect. Have we not a parallel case in the efforts made to stem the torrent of intemperance, by the passage of the Maine liquor law? Zwingle was a Christian patriot, and his Christian patriotism impelled him to reform the abuses of society. We honor the man for the noble stand he took against the vices of his age.

Did not John Knox of Scotland boldly reprove his rulers and denounce the royal family for entering into improper alliances? Did not the Saviour possess this patriotism, when he reproved the elders and rulers of the people; and after finding that his reproofs were ineffectual, did he not give vent to his religious patriotism, when he saw the subsequent ruin which was coming on Jerusalem? "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, but ye would not." Zwingle may have carried his interference in political affairs to an imprudent extent; but in the main, he was right. He indeed placed too much reliance on the State as a means of reforming society and preparing the way for a reformation of the

Church. This he acknowledged afterwards; but still, he was right in hoping, that, under God, the State might do much for the reformation of morals, and, by protecting the free preaching of the gospel, advance the cause of religion. His views of the relation of civil government to the religious community and the rights of conscience, as these views were brought out on occasion of the rise of the Anabaptists in Switzerland and Germany, were remarkably clear and just; much more so than those of the first Puritans of New England one hundred and fifty years afterwards. He never countenanced persecution for opinion's sake. "It is at once contrary to the gospel," he said, "to employ violent measures to extort a confession of faith contrary to conscience. Reason and persuasion are the *only arms* which a Christian ought to employ. If they be insufficient, we must be content to expect the conversion of those who are still in error, from time and the force of truth. When a religious sect professes opinions injurious to the safety of society, then, and then only, the magistrate may use his power to prevent or punish disorders."

Zwingle on these points, was far ahead of his times, and the principles uttered in the above extract were not practically carried out, even by Protestants, for some time after the Reformation; though at this time they have taken a firm hold on all Protestant communities, and especially in the United States of America. Zwingle was intent only on promoting the temporal and spiritual welfare of his country; and when he was brought in contact with that (the foreign service) which most immediately retarded the prosperity of his country, he had recourse to the most direct and practical means of removing it, namely, the governments of the cantons: "For he saw," as he thought, "that there would only then be room for the heavenly doctrine, when this fountain of all evils should be stopped."

Zwingle's clear mind could not but perceive that an extensive reformation of doctrine and practice was necessary in both Church and State, and like an individual flying from danger, he endeavored to remove the first obstacle which came in his way. The state of morals and religion which he found in Italy, as well as in his own country, was far from being such as is required by the doctrines of the New Testament. Not only the common people were ignorant of these doctrines; but the lower order of priests, for the most part, could not even read, and the Bible was to them an unknown book.

Notwithstanding the general ignorance, science was increasing, and minds were awakening to a sense of the errors and the vices of the times. Still in many places, where knowledge existed, there was not a corresponding piety to sanctify it. Schuler says: "Besides the brutish stupidity of the inferior priests and the people, Zwingle saw, indeed, in the great, especially in the higher clergy, and at the papal court, examples of a love of science and of the fine arts, a species of illumination before which blind superstition disappeared; it gave light to the eye for the reception of sensual beauty, and allured to a more refined voluptuousness; but it shed no light upon the mind to discern what is eternal and holy. With a specious culture was joined a cheerless infidelity, a flagitious mockery of every thing holy and divine, a self-destruction in unbelief and vice. It was a love of the fine arts and of science, a patronizing of erudition, that instantly turned into mortal hatred and furious persecution, as soon as an attempt was made to apply them to the reformation of faith and life, to the illumination and culture of the people, and thus to tread too near the hierarchy and its abuses."

The chief means by which Zwingle, throughout his course, as well as in the beginning, hoped that a reformation could

be effected, was, the free preaching of the gospel, and the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures, which had so far gone out of use. The Bible was his chief reliance. This he held forth as the word of life, and said: "From this alone does reformation proceed. Where God speaks to the heart of man, no one must force his opinion on another; the truth carries its own evidence in itself, and with itself."

Zwingle's pungent manner, and his opposition to the evils of the State offended the ruling party at Glarus, and he resolved to leave his charge, if an opportunity offered, for another field of labor. This, in the good providence of God, was afforded him; and, accordingly, a short time after his return from Milan, he took up his residence at Einsiedlen, in the canton of Schweitz. This place, situated in a valley between two lofty mountains, covered with perpetual snow, arose to a village from the humble beginning of a hermit's hut. Hence its name, Einsiedlen, that is the *hermitage.*

About five centuries previous to this, Meinhard, the son of a German nobleman, retired from the busy world, and took up his abode in this place which was then the solitude of a gloomy forest, and here erected his tent. He came to a violent death, however, by the hand of some cruel person. This gave occasion for tales of signs and wonders said to be wrought there. A hundred years later a chapel was built upon the spot and it is said, when the chapel was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, a miraculous voice called out to the bishop who was performing the ceremony, in the following words: "*Forbear! God himself has dedicated it!* The bishop then informed the people, who inquired how this was done, as the story goes, that at midnight, when the brethren were at prayer, angels were heard most sweetly singing the hymns of dedication! This marvellous story gave rise to the belief that God dwelt in this place in a more peculiar manner than in any other. The pope gave credit to the

story, and published, that here plenary indulgence should be granted to all who would make a pilgrimage hither. Hence the inscription over the door of the convent: *Here is plenary absolution for the guilt and punishment of all sin.* Besides this, in subsequent times, when the revenues of the convent began to fail, a miraculous image of the Virgin was invented, to draw persons thither from a distance. Thousands, accordingly, from all parts of the surrounding country annually repaired to Einsiedlen to offer their devotions.

To this place Zwingle was invited by Theobald of Geroldseck, the proprietor of the convent, a liberal minded man, and an encourager of learning. Though Zwingle could not but regret, that the ill reception of his labors by some of the people of Glarus, compelled him to leave that field, yet, he found in Einsiedlen many advantages which he did not there enjoy. Here he had the opportunity of speaking to a greater number of persons from many parts of the country, and thus disseminating correct views of doctrine more extensively. Here he also had the advantage of the society of men of kindred minds with himself, as Francis Zink and John Taureolus. Here he also received a greater stimulus to study, and enjoyed special facilities for self-improvement. He devoted himself especially to the study of the Greek language, of which he was an enthusiastic admirer. He was ranked amongst the profoundest Greek scholars of that age. He thoroughly studied the Bible in the original languages, as well as the interpretations given of it by the fathers. By this means, he discovered more and more, the difference between some of the doctrines and practices of the Church and the teachings of the Scriptures.

In recommending the writings of Jerome to Geroldseck, as a help in understanding the Scriptures, he said, "If God will, the time will soon be at hand, when neither Jerome, nor

any other, but the Scriptures only, will have much weight with Christians." While he acknowledged the use of commentators and the importance of the articles of the Apostles' Creed, and the doctrines of the primitive Church, as they were handed down in connection with their history to his own time, as means by which to properly understand the Bible, he, at the same time, fully believed that the Scriptures were the highest standard and norm of authority, and that, whilst tradition aided in coming to a proper knowledge of Scripture, Scripture was, at the same time, the highest standard by which to judge of the correctness of tradition or doctrine. This was the true medium. Whilst, on the one hand, sectarianism rejects all tradition so far as systems of doctrine and articles of faith are concerned, except its own, which it assumes to be the only and entirely correct explanation of the Scriptures, and thus runs into division and disorganization of the Church; on the other hand, the Roman Catholics place their tradition above the Bible, practically, at least, which will always leave them to run into error; for it is too exclusively following human guidance, inasmuch as the doctrine of infallibility of the Church is absurd and cannot be relied on; for it is plain that the Roman Catholic Church is defective. For her, therefore, to expect entire uniformity of belief on all points, is unreasonable; it is impossible. To accomplish it, man's reason, the noblest powers of his mind, would have to be destroyed. You cannot chain down the human spirit to uniformity in nonessentials, much less in that which is absurd and false. The only way to arrive at truth in doubtful matters, is by investigation or by trial. "Heresies will arise, that they that are approved may be made manifest." To require uniformity and submission in nonessentials is the first step to division.

Zwingle's prediction has been, in a great measure, fulfill-

ed; for with all its abuse, misuse, and perversion, the Bible, though not "the religion of Protestants," is the highest rule and exponent of that religion, as well as the chief manual by which to enlighten the mind and edify the heart of the individual members of the Church. This idea has taken firm possession of the Protestant Christians. The Bible, to them, is the only infallible guide in itself, and as such, is an object of faith. The only question, and a very important one, is, How shall we come to a proper knowledge of its contents in that which is doubtful as well as in that which is clear? The only way to accomplish this object, is by taking such helps as we have; first the Apostles' Creed, and the whole doctrine of the Church or systematic theology, and the history and development of truth and heresy. Time will show every doctrine of what sort it is, by its practical workings viewed in the light of Scripture. And secondly, the directing and witnessing influence of the Holy Spirit, in connection with the means of grace. The Saviour says: "When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." And again: "That he may abide with you for ever." These are the means by which we may be properly guided in our investigations of religious truth; and these Zwingle employed, and by the decisions of the Church, in connection with these means, he was willing to abide.

He was anxious, that the Church should enter on the investigation of her doctrines with the Scriptures for her guide, and he made strenuous efforts to bring this about. He wrote letters to the bishop of Constance, showing the necessity of a reformation, and desiring him, together with the pope, to direct the clergy to efforts for accomplishing it. The pope, however, refused; but Zwingle continued to study the Bible, with such helps as he had at command. To the Bible he clung as, when rightly interpreted, the word of God in a peculiar manner. *The gospel, he affirm-*

ed, is above all human authority, and is the only infallible rule of faith, the only infallible standard of Christian truth.

His diligent study of the Bible, at this time, kindled in him a holy enthusiasm for truth, which he soon succeeded in infusing into the circle of his learned friends at Einsiedlen. "His eminent abilities and excellent character secured to him a personal influence, which he exerted for the noblest ends and with happy effect. The whole convent, with one single exception, were brought over to his religious sentiments. The light broke in upon their vision, and shone with increasing brightness from day to day. The Bible was before them and was no longer a sealed book." His success in Einsiedlen was all that heart could wish. He was inspired with courage and began to hope that this good beginning was the harbinger of a general reformation. He had no thoughts as yet of separating from the Roman Church, but as the Roman Church acknowledged the Bible to be the inspired word of God, he expected it would be influenced by the example of himself and colleagues to aid in, or at least permit a reformation. He had hopes that all could agree upon the Bible. He proceeded from the beginning upon the principle, *That the authority of the gospel is above all human authority. Scripture must be explained by Scripture: the free preaching of the gospel must be permitted and thereby, under the superintendence of the pope and the heirarchy, the Church reformed.*

It was not long, however, until he found that the pope would not sanction his principles, and he accordingly had recourse to efforts by which the pope might be deprived of his power of dictation. He conferred with Capito by letter about the way or means of subjecting the pope to the authority of the gospel, and leaving him nothing more than "the first rank among the ministers of the Church." His plan seems to have been to appeal to the Scriptures which

the pope himself acknowledged. In the mean time, he devoted himself to the elucidation of the written word of God, to all who came to Einsiedlen from far and near; and of these there were not a few. Thus he was enabled to sow, broadcast, the seeds of the reformation, which followed in Switzerland and Germany.

The manner and matter of his preaching was in accordance with the gospel. "He denied the efficacy of indulgences, or of absolutions that were granted for money, and exploded the merit of vows, pilgrimages or other works that were designed to propitiate the Deity; and he enjoined upon all to look to the state of their hearts and to strive after internal purity, if they would render to God an acceptable service." He directed his hearers to Jesus Christ as the means and medium by which they could render obedience to God—by which they could obtain pardon and sanctification. He practically taught the doctrine of direct union and communion with God, through the person of Jesus Christ, by prayer and the exercise of faith, in connection with the means of grace in the Church; and if any after him ran into rationalistic errors, and denied the efficacy of grace by the means in the Church, it was not by the sanction of his example; for he loved the Church dearly. It was because he loved the Church, however, that he wished to aid in bringing her back, where she had departed from the faith, and in leading her forward, where she had not fulfilled her mission and design.

Thus he continued to explain the doctrines of the gospel, when, on the occasion of the festival in commemoration of the angelic dedication of the convent, when countless numbers from all parts of the country were present to pay their devotions at this shrine of the Virgin, he proclaimed in a peculiar and powerful manner the pure gospel of Christ, and exposed the superstitions of the people. Viewing the

multitude, who anxiously came here to obtain peace to their consciences, his soul was moved with compassion toward them, and he eloquently pointed out to them the true way of salvation for the oppressed and bewildered soul. "If any thing," says Schuler, "could equal the effect of Peter's first sermon in Jerusalem, or Paul's preaching in Asia Minor, it was this sermon of the Reformer." "Universal astonishment filled the agitated multitude. Many wondered that the preacher was not miraculously smitten on the spot, as a proof of the Virgin's abhorrence." The greater number, however, were favorably impressed, being unable to withstand the power and wisdom of Zwingle's words. "Crowds of them, both high and low, returned to their homes agitated with various feelings, and proclaimed to those whom they met on their way the new doctrine they had heard at *Einsiedlen*. These caught the same spirit, and turned away to ponder on the strange occurrence, or to communicate their feelings and to spread the infection." Einsiedlen especially was reformed. The people became captivated with the truth, and willingly submitted to the temporal loss they sustained, by reason of the falling off of the number of the pilgrims; for they were persuaded, that the money received from these visitors, was the wages of unrighteousness.

During this same year, a man by the name of Sampson was passing through Switzerland, on the authority and by the direction of the pope, selling indulgences: or in plainer words, pronouncing the forgiveness of sins for money. His appearance seems to have occasioned Zwingle to come out so boldly against the indulgences and other kindred errors at this time. Zwingle felt secure in opposing these errors; for he knew that he was sustained by the Scriptures, which the Catholic Church acknowledged; and the only reason why he was not rigorously dealt with, was his excellent

character. He was known as a lover of his country, who wished to do his best in promoting its welfare. The pope knew more of Zwingle at this time than he did of Luther, and yet he did not excommunicate him. Through the representations of cardinal Shinner, who was Zwingle's friend, he was induced, no doubt, to be more lenient. "He knew him as a man of refined taste and elegant literature, as a Swiss patriot, whose influence was extensively felt in his own country," and he preferred to win him with kindness, if possible, knowing that the high spirited Swiss could be more effectually gained in this way than by severity. In this manner he was left unmolested during his stay at Einsiedlen.

His popularity had now spread over *Switzerland*, and in this same year, 1518, he was elected to the office of pastor in the Great Minster—the principal church in Zurich. Zurich had become a centre of learning and influence. "A purer patriotism prevailed at that time, than had preceded it, and the government was administered by a wise and magnanimous council." Zwingle, therefore, cheerfully accepted the office, as it afforded him a greater scope to effect his cherished design at reformation.

Being set as a guide on the walls of Zion, he was anxious to guide the minds of the people into the right channel. He was fully convinced; for he beheld tokens on every side, that the people were being aroused to inquiry, and to a sense of the need of a reformation of many things, which had become odious to conscience and common sense. And he was fearful, that, if they were not properly guided, they would break over wholesome restraint and run into worse errors, than those which they would reject. His fears were well grounded; for he found it difficult to prevent excesses in the subsequent course of events in Switzerland. Indeed this is a difficulty, which has its foundation in human nature,

and has existed in every age of the world; for nothing is more difficult than to get people to think right. Yet this is the only proper way of guiding them into the truth. You cannot chain down the mind to blind submission to authority. This is impossible. The understanding must be enlightened. Faith should submit only to the authority of the word of God—to the truths which are clearly revealed. The mind should have free scope, and thus become a law to itself, submitting only to the authority of truth, and directing its energies to those things which are expedient and useful. Faith should bind the mind and will to the truth as it is in Jesus, and hope should stimulate to exertion, while charity should constrain to the performance of duty, and the promotion of the welfare of the Church.

Zwingle, as preacher in Zurich, now entered with diligence on the work of expounding the Scriptures. He took a new course in his expositions. Instead of explaining only the select portions, which had been given for this purpose, he went over several books of the New Testament in order. In this manner he was enabled more fully to bring out "the whole counsel of God." On the first day of the year 1519, which was also his thirty-fifth birth day, Zwingle preached his first sermon in the pulpit of the cathedral. A great crowd was collected to hear him. "It is to Christ," said Zwingle, "that I desire to lead you; to Christ the true source of salvation. His divine Word is the only food I wish to set before your hearts and souls."

The next day, which was Sunday, a still greater multitude assembled. Zwingle opened to the first chapter of Matthew, and discoursed on the history of the patriarchs and prophets, explaining the gospel in such a manner, that the hearers exclaimed: "We never heard the like of this before." Thus he went over the whole of Matthew. "Setting forth the highest truths of the gospel in simple language, his

preaching reached all classes, the learned and the ignorant." All this, however, did not make him proud or vain. He was too pious and of too great and noble a mind to be thus influenced. "All his strength, and all the delight of his heart was in God." Two men of learning and distinction, who came to hear Zwingle's first sermon, said, as they retired: "Glory be to God! this man is a preacher of the truth. He will be our Moses to lead us out of the Egyptian darkness. After a while, however, those who were unwilling to see a reformation take place, raised their voices against him. "Some laughed and joked; others gave utterance to violent threats; but he endured all with Christian patience." He was accustomed to say: "If we desire to gain over the wicked to Jesus Christ, we must shut our eyes to many things."

He performed his duty as a true pastor. His character and his deportment towards all men contributed as much as his discourses, to win their hearts. "He was at once a true Christian and a true republican. The equality of mankind was not with him a mere conventional term; it was written in his heart, and shown by his life. Men felt attracted towards him, and were at ease in his society. Bold and energetic in the pulpit, he was affable to all whom he met in the streets or public places. He addressed peasants and patricians with the same cordiality." One of his most violent enemies says: "He invited the country people to dine with him, walked with them, talked to them of God, put the devil in their hearts, and his books into their pockets."

As he did previously, so now he continued to cultivate music with moderation. His opponents, in derision, called him "the evangelical lute player and fifer." Faber having one day censured him for his taste, he replied: "My dear Faber, you do not know what music is. True, I have

learned to play on the lute, the violin, and other instruments, and they serve me to quiet little children; but you are too holy for music! Do you not know, that David was a skillful player on the harp, and how by this means he drove the evil spirit out of Saul? Ah! if you did but know the sounds of the heavenly lyre, the wicked spirit of ambition and love of riches, which possess you, would soon depart likewise." Music afforded him relaxation and pleasure in the intervals of study. He was a hard student and a true spiritual shepherd. "He would eat and drink with all who invited him; he despised no one; he was compassionate to the poor; always steadfast and cheerful in good and evil fortune. No misfortune alarmed him; his conversation was at all times full of consolation and his heart firm." Thus his popularity could not but increase, while he imitated his divine Master, going about doing good.

A circumstance took place shortly after his settlement at Zurich, which called forth Zwingle's zeal in a more than ordinary manner. Sampson, the famous indulgence merchant, was approaching Zurich, saying: "I am aware, that Zwingle will speak against me; but I will stop his mouth." "But Zwingle had drunk too deep in the fountain of salvation, and felt too truly the sweetness of God's forgiving love, not to attack the papist indulgences of these men. Though often trembling in view of his sinfulness, he found mercy of the Lord, and justification in Christ. He rejoiced in "the Lord our righteousness." "When my heart is troubled because of my helplessness, and the weakness of my flesh," said he, "my spirit is revived at these glad tidings: 'Christ is thy innocence! Christ is thy righteousness!'" In view of such truths, Zwingle feared not to attack the traffic of Sampson. "No man," said he, "can remit sin; Christ, who is very God and very man, alone has this power. Go! buy indulgences—but be assured, that

you are not absolved. Those who sell remission of sins for money, are the companions of Simon the magician, the friends of Balaam, and ambassadors of Satan."

Sampson was not admitted into Zurich to sell indulgences. He left in anger and soon after returned to Italy.

Like all laborious pastors, Zwingle needed relaxation. Accordingly he hastened to the baths of Pfeffers. These baths are situated on the waters of the Jamina, where it pours its impetuous torrent over the rocks into a deep gulf, called by a hermit, the infernal gulf, in which the dwellings are perpetually shaken by the fall of the torrent, and moistened by the spray of its broken waters. "Torches were required to be burned at noon-day in the house where Zwingle lodged. It was even asserted by the inhabitants, that frightful spectres appeared sometimes amid the gloom."

While here, Zwingle suddenly received the intelligence that an epidemic disease, called the *great death*, had broken out in Zurich. He returned immediately, and mingled among the sick and dying; but was soon attacked himself by the plague. "His thoughts were now turned inwards; his eyes were directed to heaven," and he vented the feelings of his heart in a hymn, the sense of which may be translated as follows:

Lo! at the door
I hear death's knock!
Shield me, O Lord,
My strength and rock.

The hand once nailed
Upon the tree,
Jesus, uplift—
And shelter me.

Willest thou, then,
Death conquer me
In my noon-day?
So let it be!

Oh! may I die,
Since I am thine;
Thy home is made
For faith like mine!

Further on he exclaimed:

My pains increase:
Lord, stand thou near.
Body and soul
Dissolve with fear.

Now death is near,
My tongue is dumb:
Fight for me, Lord;
Mine hour is come!

See, Satan's net
Is o'er me tossed,—
I feel his hand—
Must I be lost?

His shafts, his voice
Alarm no more;
For here I lie
Thy cross before.

He was nearly gone, and his friends were greatly alarmed. The news went abroad that he was actually dead. "Alas!" exclaimed Hedio in tears, "the preserver of our country, the trumpet of the gospel, the magnanimous herald of truth, is cut down in the spring-tide of his life." But he was agreeably disappointed. Zwingle once more stood up to proclaim the gospel—to place the bright candle of the Lord on the candlestick of the Church. The disease had fled, and Zwingle with gratitude exclaimed:

My God, my sire,
Healed by thy hand,
Upon the earth
Once more I stand.

From guilt and sin
May I be free!
My mouth shall sing
Alone of thee!

The uncertain hour
For me will come—
O'erwhelmed, perchance,
With deeper gloom.

It matters not!
With joy I'll bear
My yoke, until
I reach heaven's sphere.

Zwingle's zeal and preaching against the sins of the Church awakened more and more opposition. "One day, as Zwingle and his curates were quietly conversing in their house, some citizens entered hastily, saying: "Have you strong bolts to your doors? Be on your guard to-night." They often had such alarms.

What increased the enmity still more, was Zwingle's opposition to the foreign war, into which the cantons of Switzerland were again about this time entering. After the first enlistment, Zurich refused to furnish any more troops. A defeat was sustained by the Swiss in the service of the king of France, and the confederates returned home exasperated against Zwingle, whom they charged with being the cause of all their calamities. This unfortunate concurrence of circumstances hindered the reformation in Switzerland greatly. It was confined to narrower limits, than it otherwise would have been. Zurich, however, sided with Zwingle, and in the end, the greater part of Switzerland adopted the doctrines of the Reform.

About this time a monk of Avignon, Francis Lambert, came to visit Zwingle. This Frenchman had found some of the writings of Luther in his cell, and having left the convent, he went about preaching some of the doctrines of the Reformers. Zwingle, highly delighted, opened the church of Zurich to him. In three sermons Lambert preached forcibly against the errors of Rome, but in the fourth he

defended the invocation of Mary and of the saints. "Brother! thou art mistaken," said Zwingle. Some persons present, unfriendly to Zwingle, rejoiced to see him thus opposed, and said to Lambert: "He has attacked you. Demand a public discussion." The monk of Avignon did so. The discussion was opened by the Reformer, who continued discussing and explaining passages of Scripture until 2 o'clock, when the Frenchman clasping his hands and raising them to heaven, exclaimed: "I thank thee, O God, that, by means of such an illustrious instrument, thou hast brought me to so clear a knowledge of the truth!" "Henceforth," added he, turning to the assembly, "in all my tribulations, I will call on God alone, and will throw aside my beads. To-morrow I will resume my journey; I am going to Basle to see Erasmus of Rotterdam, and from thence to Wittemberg, to visit Martin Luther, the Augustine monk."

The forced celibacy of the clergy was a practice early opposed by the reformers. Zwingle, about this time, carried his theory into practice, and entered into the bonds of holy wedlock. He married Anna Reinhard, the widow of Meyer of Knonau, a pious and most excellent lady, well fitted to be his companion for life. He realized all the obligations and the affections of the conjugal state. He termed it, "A most holy alliance." "In like manner," said he, "as Christ died for his followers, and gave himself entirely for them, so should married persons do all and suffer all for one another."

Zwingle being now greatly misrepresented and his enemies becoming emboldened by the late decision of the diet of Worms against Luther, he solicited a public conference in which he might be permitted to defend himself against the charge of heresy. Accordingly the conference was held, and he was entirely successful in repelling the accusations brought against him by the bishop of Constance as

well as others; not, however, by proving that there was no difference between himself and his opponents, but by proving from the Bible the correctness of his position.

During these times, when he was persecuted, and in danger of being crushed, his five brothers who continued to reside in the mountains of Tockenburg, and who remained in their allegiance to Rome, addressed him with great concern, dissuading him from his course. They had heard reports, exaggerated no doubt, that he had departed from the simple faith of the gospel, "and they pictured to themselves their brother dragged before the bishop of Constance, and a pile erected for his destruction on the same spot where John Huss had perished in the flames." They could not endure to be called the brother of a heretic and expressed their fears and disapprobation accordingly. Zwingle replied: "I know everything that can befall me. There is no danger, no misfortune that I have not carefully weighed long ago. Banish all anxiety, dear brothers. If I have any fear, it is lest I have been milder and gentler than suits our times. What reproach (you say) will be cast upon our family, if you be burnt—O, my dear brothers, all my labors have no other aim than to proclaim to men the treasures of happiness which Christ hath purchased for us. If this doctrine scandalizes you, your anger cannot stop me. You are my brothers—yes! my own brothers, sons of the same father, fruit of the same womb; but if you were not my brothers in Christ, and in the work of faith, then my grief would be so violent, that nothing could equal it. Farewell—I shall never cease to be your affectionate brother, if you will only not cease to be the brethren of Jesus Christ."

The contest was evidently growing hotter and hotter between the advocates of the fundamental, but much neglected teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and the advocates of the nonessential and often evil and false teachings of the mis-

taken and false tradition of the Pope. Zwingle's penetrating eye saw the contest that was coming on. His own relations were turning against him; the monks and the priests were uniting to oppose him. He had enemies in the council of Zurich. And the general diet of the confederacy was likely to be against him. The majority of the cantons seemed determined to engage in foreign war, and especially in aid of the pope "to pour forth their invincible phalanxes from the mountains of Switzerland to save Rome, and annihilate, at the cost of their lives, the rising faith of the sons of the Reformation." Zwingle shuddered at the prospect. What a future! Shall the work, hardly begun, be destroyed? Oppressed with these thoughts and trembling with anxiety, Zwingle poured forth his soul in prayer: "O Jesus, thou seest how the wicked and the blasphemous stun thy people's ears with their clamors. Thou knowest how from my childhood I have hated all dispute, and yet, in despite of myself, Thou hast not ceased to impel me to the conflict. Therefore, do I call upon Thee with confidence to complete what Thou hast begun. If I have built anything wrongly, do thou throw it down with Thy mighty hand. If I have laid any other foundation than Thee, let thy powerful arm destroy it. O vine abounding in sweetness, whose husbandman is the Father, and whose branches are we, do not abandon thy shoots. For thou hast promised to be with us until the end of the world." This was a prayer of faith, and was, in a measure at least, fulfilled. There is nothing like trusting with implicit confidence in God; and this was a distinguishing characteristic of the Reformers. It was impossible that those who had the witnessing influence of the Spirit should pray altogether in vain. It was reasonable that God in his own good time and way should hear and answer their prayers.

But Zwingle was called to behold other obstacles arising

to hinder the Reformation, than those which presented themselves from without. There were obstacles within as well as without. What heightened the difficulties of our Reformer was the mistakes of his friends.

About this time a fanatical party arose, who were termed Anabaptists. Their zeal was not according to knowledge. They opposed infant baptism; pretended to receive direct divine revelations from heaven, aside from the Scripture; and refused to obey the laws of the country. By this sect many good people were turned aside and their assistance lost to the Reformation. Moreover, the excesses and errors of this sect gave a handle to the friends of Rome to accuse the Reformation of evil consequences. However, these consequences were not the necessary result of the new movement, but the extremes to which some persons went, as is the case in every movement of importance, and which involves difficult problems in the Christian religion, owing to the weakness and imperfections of the human mind.

The Anabaptists, endeavoring to be strict and precise in religious observances, now gave themselves up to all manner of childish and ridiculous conceits. From the words of the Saviour exhorting us to become like little children, "these unhappy creatures began to clap their hands and skip about the streets, to dance in a ring, sit on the ground, and tumble each other about in the dust. Some burned the New Testament, saying: 'The letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life.' Others falling into convulsions, pretended to have revelations from the Holy Ghost."

An aged farmer, John Shucker, near St. Gall, had a meeting and festival of these deluded people at his house. The night was passed in fanatical exercises, convulsions, visions and revelations. In the morning, two of his sons, Thomas and Leonard, who were distinguished for their fanaticism, being still heated by the excitement of the night,

lost their reason. Thomas took the bladder of the calf which had been slain for the festival, and dipped it in the gall, in imitation of the figurative language of the prophets, and approached his brother, saying with a slow, solemn voice, "Thus *bitter* is the death thou art to suffer." Then adding, "Brother Leonard, kneel down;" Leonard fell on his knees. Again: "Brother Leonard, arise;" Leonard stood up. The family and others looked on with astonishment, wondering what would be the result. Thomas quickly resumed: "Leonard, kneel down again." He did so. The spectators were alarmed in view of his manner and appearance. "Fear not," said Thomas, "nothing will happen but the will of God," and hastily taking a sword, he cut off his head, exclaiming: "Now the will of the Lord is accomplished," and rushing out of the house, he entered the house of the burgomaster Joachim Vadian, saying to him: "I proclaim to thee the day of the Lord."

Such were the excesses of the Anabaptists. To oppose them, Zwingle had a public discussion in the council-hall of Zurich, in which he defended the following propositions:

"Children born of believing parents, are children of God, like those who were born under the Old Testament, and consequently may receive baptism.

"Baptism, under the New Testament, is what circumcision was under the Old; consequently baptism ought now to be administered to children, as circumcision was formerly.

"We cannot prove the custom of re-baptizing, either by example, texts, or arguments drawn from Scripture; and those who are re-baptized, crucify Jesus Christ afresh."

But Zwingle had a still more serious difficulty, and one which gave him, if possible, still greater concern than that of the errors of the Anabaptists. This was the difference of his views on the nature of the real presence of Christ in

the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, from those of Luther, his illustrious coadjutor of Germany. This sacrament, of which it is enough to say, that it is of divine appointment and an excellent means of grace, and around which, as the representation and seal of this mystery of divine influence, of regeneration, and sanctification, cluster all the holy and constraining motives, principles, and truths of the Christian religion, has ever engaged the attention and study of the Church.

By degrees Luther and Zwingle came to differ in their views of the nature of this sacrament. The extremes of the Anabaptists in rejecting infant baptism, and denying the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, as well as pretending to particular inspiration, and breaking images, drove Luther to the opposite extreme of maintaining that the human flesh of Christ was present in the sacrament. And his opposition to a more reasonable view, was increased by some personal difficulties which he had with the fanatics, and particularly with Andrew Bodenstein, (Carlstadt,) his former friend and coadjutor at Wittemberg. A party spirit was thus gotten up, in which passion had more to do than conscience; and Carlstadt, being driven from Germany, fled to Switzerland and conferred with Zwingle. These two tendencies, which originally existed, in explaining the mode of the Saviour's presence in the Eucharist, thus took an unhappy turn, which finally resulted in separation and division. This, perhaps, was necessary, in the providence of God, in order that the precious truth or truths, which lay between, might be the more fully appreciated in the end. Thus God brings good out of evil.

When Zwingle ascertained that he differed from the Saxon Reformer on the question of the Eucharist, he feared the consequences. Luther, on the other hand, not aware of the opposition he was encountering, did not hesitate to

class Zwingle and his friends with Carlstadt and the other fanatics. Having vanquished Carlstadt and the enthusiasts of Germany with great ease, and successfully opposed Rome, and having thus become accustomed to conquer, he feared not to encounter the small band of Swiss reformers. But he was made to feel, that their conquest was not so easy. In spite of all his skill at argument, and his eloquence in debate, the opposition made headway against him. The fact was, Luther here for once made a great mistake, and his popularity alone perhaps prevented the Reformed tendency from succeeding entirely. But it was all for the best, as is shown at the present day, by the extreme to which some are liable to go, in denying any real presence of Christ in the supper.

Luther, having attacked his friend Zwingle, the latter no longer hesitated, and published a letter written to a minister named Albert, together with a *Commentary on true and false religion*, in which he defended his views.

Different persons now ranged themselves with the one or the other party. Œcolampadius, whose birth place was Weinsberg, about five miles from the city of Heidelberg, and who had been considered a firm friend of Luther, now occupying the position of pastor of the church of Basle in Switzerland, came out in support of the views of Zwingle. This truly amiable, learned and excellent person was universally respected, wherever he was known. So mild, affable and serious was he, that his very appearance inspired the beholder with reverence. When he led the debate against Dr. Eck at Baden, his enemies were heard to say: "Would that the tall sallow man were on our side."

"The mere fact," says D'Aubigne, "that Œcolampanius had joined the reformer of Zurich, excited an immense sensation, not only in Basle but in all Germany. Luther was deeply affected by it."

Luther had a conviction, however, that he was right; but this conviction was produced rather, by the danger which he thought he saw in the doctrines of his opponents, than by the consistency of his own. Having this conviction, he cast himself, with all the impetuosity of his nature, on the other side, and with his characteristic obstinacy, maintained his position. It is lamentable to behold, how he labored and toiled to prove his points; for with all his ability, a great deal of his argumentation was but a play upon words. The calm dignity, with which Œcolampadius met him, and rebutted his arguments, stands in enviable contrast with the blustering and rude attacks of Luther.

This controversy, which Luther expected to be brief, continued to disturb him to the end of his life. It is said that his mental efforts in this controversy, affected his health. One day he fainted in the arms of his wife and friends; he was a whole week as if in "death and hell." "He had lost Jesus Christ," he said, "and was tossed to and fro by the tempests of despair. The world was passing away, and announcing by prodigies, that the last day was at hand."

Philip, the landgrave of Hesse, seeing that the dissentions of the Protestants were likely to prove the ruin of their own cause, requested the two champions and their friends, to meet at Marburg and hold a conference, for the purpose of reconciling their differences, if possible. The conference was held.

Luther rose and said: "I differ from my adversaries with regard to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and I shall always differ from them. Christ has said, *This is my body*. Let them show me that a body is not a body. I reject reason, common sense, carnal argument, and mathematical proof. God is above mathematics. We have the word of God; we must adore it and perform it."

Œcolampadius answered: "There are figures of speech

in the word of God; as *John* is *Elias; the rock was Christ; I am the vine.* The expression, *This is my body*, is a figure of the same kind." To prove it, he employed the following syllogism;

"What Christ rejected in the sixth chapter of John, he could not admit in the words of the Eucharist. Now, Christ, who said to the people of Capernaum, *The flesh profiteth nothing*, rejected by those very words, the oral manducation of his body. Therefore he did not establish it at the institution of his Supper."

Luther contended, however, that there was a kind of eating of Christ's flesh with the mouth, which Christ did not reject.

Œcolampadius replied: "Eating of the flesh at all, with the mouth, is useless."

Zwingle now joined in the discussion. "We must explain Scripture by Scripture," said he; "we cannot admit of two kinds of corporeal manducation, as if Jesus had spoken of eating, and the Capernaites of tearing in pieces; for the same word is employed in both cases. Jesus says, that eating his flesh corporeally profiteth nothing; whence it would result, that he had given us in the Supper a thing that would be useless to us."

Luther.—"When Christ says the flesh profiteth nothing, he is speaking not of his own flesh, but of ours."

Zwingle.—"The soul is fed with the Spirit, and not with the flesh."

Luther.—"It is with the mouth that we eat the body; the soul does not eat it."

Zwingle.—"Christ's body is, therefore, a corporeal nourishment, and not a spiritual."

Luther.—"You are captious."

Zwingle.—"Not so; but you utter contradictory things."

Luther.—"If God should present me wild apples, I should

eat them spiritually. In the Eucharist, the mouth receives the body of Christ, and the soul believes in his words."

This was a curious view. "Eat wild apples spiritually!" Everything was thus jumbled together, and the spirituality of a religious act consisted in obeying the command and will of God. With all his freeness, Luther here went far in returning to the formality and legalism of Rome.

Francis Lambert, formerly a monk of Avignon, and now a professor at Marburg, who had been of Luther's opinion, after hearing Zwingle and Œcolampadius, exclaimed: "Yes! the Spirit; it is the Spirit which vivifies."

The Wittembergers pronounced this change of views, "French fickleness." But Lambert referred to the conversion of Paul from Pharisaism, and asked, if that was fickleness.

Luther was still obstinate. He had written with a piece of chalk on the velvet cover of the table before him, these words: *This is my body;* saying: "The devil himself shall not drive me from that. To seek to understand it, is to fall away from the faith."

Zwingle accused him of always singing the same song, and asked him if Christ did not wish to reply to the question, which had been put to him. (John 6.)

Luther replied: "Master Zwingle, you wish to stop my mouth with the arrogancy of your language. That passage has nothing to do here."

Zwingle.—"Pardon me, Doctor; that passage breaks your neck."

Luther, further on in the discussion, said: "Christ's body is in the sacrament; but it is not there as in a place."

Zwingle.—"Then it is not there at all."

Luther.—"Sophists say, that a body may be in several places at once; as the universe, for example, which is a body."

Zwingle, who had more than one arrow in his quiver, went on to disprove this, by exegesis and philosophy, and the testimony of the Fathers.

But Luther still replied: "It is written, *This is my body.*"

Zwingle, impatient, said: "All this is idle wrangling. An obstinate disputant might also maintain this expression of the Saviour: *Behold thy son*, pointing to St. John. Vain would be any explanation, he would still cry: Behold thy son, behold thy son!"

Œcolampadius now observed, with regard to Luther's assertion: "If the body of Christ is not locally present in the Eucharist, then no real body is there; for every one knows that the essence of a body is its existence in a place."

The chancellor of the landgrave now urged the disputants to come to an understanding. "I know but one means for that," said Luther, "and this is: Let our adversaries believe as we do." "We cannot," answered the Swiss. "Well then," rejoined Luther, "I abandon you to the judgments of God, and pray that he will enlighten you." "We will do the same," added Œcolampadius.

"During these words, Zwingle sat silent, but finally, overcome by his feelings and earnest desire for union, he burst into tears, in the presence of all."

The conference was ended. But another effort was made to unite before they separated for their homes.

"Let us carefully avoid," said the Swiss divines, "all harsh words and writings, and let each defend himself without railing."

Luther, advancing toward the Swiss, said: "We consent, and I offer you the hand of peace and charity."

"The Swiss rushed in great commotion toward the Wittembergers, and all shook hands. Luther himself was softened. Christian charity resumed her rights in his heart."

"Assuredly," said he, "a great portion of the scandal is taken away by the suppression of our fierce debates; we could not have hoped for so much. May Christ's hand remove the last obstacle that separates us. There is now a friendly concord between us, and if we persevere in prayer, brotherhood will come."

He was in hopes, however, that this would result from the Swiss coming over to his opinion; for he still secretly felt, as he had said before, that they were of a different spirit; and he imagined that his view was essential to salvation.

But erring in the latter, he was also mistaken in the former; for Zwingle soon wrote to the landgrave: "Lutheranism will lie as heavy upon us as popery."

As usual in debates, both sides claimed the victory; but the judgment of history, as expressed by D'Aubigne, is nearest to the correct one. He says: "If it should be asked on which side the victory really was, perhaps we ought to say that Luther assumed the air of a conqueror, but Zwingle was so in reality."

Passing by much that is interesting in the life of Zwingle, we hasten toward the conclusion of his career.

Zwingle figured conspicuously also as a politician. His cherished object was to secure the free preaching of the gospel. And for this purpose, he freely gave his advice to the people of Zurich and of the other cantons. Nevertheless, such was his strength and superior genius, that he was enabled to perform all the labor also of pastor, preacher, divine and author. So indefatigable was his activity, that, as says D'Aubigne, "There was in this great man enough to fill up many lives."

On the occasion of the execution of a worthy and quiet pastor, named Keyser, on a funeral pile, for his religion, by the Romish authorities of the canton of Schweitz, Zwin-

gle advised energetic measures. "Let us be firm," said he, "and fear not to take up arms. We thirst for no man's blood; but we will clip the wings of the oligarchy. If we shun war, the truth of the gospel and the ministers' lives will never be secure among us." Perhaps prudence would have dictated a milder course. Zwingle did not think so. "Undoubtedly," said he, "we must trust in God alone; but when he gives us a just cause, we must know also how to defend it, and like Joshua and Gideon, shed blood in behalf of our country and our God." If there were any prospect of success, a revolution for religious freedom was justifiable; only this should have been left more exclusively to politicians and the government to direct. But Zwingle was the only man that would lead, and therefore, he cast himself into the breach to save his country and his religion.

Some were astonished at his boldness, and doubted if he were influenced by the gospel of peace. "Ah!" said one of his friends, Myconius, who knew him best, "Zwingle certainly was an intrepid man in the midst of danger; but he always had a horror of blood, even of that of his most deadly enemies. The freedom of his country, the virtues of our forefathers, and above all, the glory of Christ, were the sole end of his designs. I speak the truth, as if in the presence of God."

The Romish cantons had entered into an alliance with Austria, the ancient enemy of all Switzerland, and mustered a large force. War seemed inevitable; but after negotiating awhile, peace was restored. Although the free preaching of the gospel was not secured, liberty of conscience was; and an indemnity was secured to Keyser's family.

The boldness of Zurich, and her war-like demonstrations, were successful this time; but there was another contest

at hand. Zwingle had dark forebodings of the future. He could not be cheered by the joyful shouts of the people. "You will regret this peace," said he, "and smite your breasts." About this time, giving vent to his sadness and hope, whilst descending the Alps, he composed the following hymn, often sung in the fields of the Swiss, among the burghers of their cities, and even in the palaces of kings:

"Do Thou direct thy chariot, Lord,
And guide it at thy will;
Without thy aid our strength is vain,
And useless all our skill.
Look down upon thy saints brought low,
And prostrate laid beneath the foe.

Beloved Pastor, who hast saved
Our souls from death and sin;
Uplift thy voice, awake thy sheep,
That slumbering lie within
Thy fold, and curb with thy right hand,
The rage of Satan's furious band.

Send down thy peace, and banish strife,
Let bitterness depart;
Revive the spirit of the past
In every Schweitzer's heart;
Then shall thy Church forever sing
The praises of her heavenly king.

Soon after this treaty of peace, other difficulties arose between the Protestant and Popish cantons, but principally with regard to the free preaching of the Word. Zwingle advised his friends to settle the dispute immediately by arms. If they were united, he had sanguine hopes of success; but they were divided in their counsels. The Protestant cantons were determined upon a measure, which Zwingle did not approve. It was this: They declared a blockade of the Popish cantons, forbidding their people to carry on any commerce with them, or to furnish them in any way

with articles of food, &c. This was improper and unjust, and Zwingle saw in it evil consequences to the Reform. The Popish cantons were highly exasperated, and in an unexpected moment, they came upon Zurich with a superior force to demand satisfaction.

Zwingle, having been brought by circumstances, as well as by his republican education, to take an active part in politics, and his advice not being taken, he became heart-broken and discouraged. He, therefore, resolved to withdraw from Zurich, to seek an asylum elsewhere. He appeared before the Great Council on the 26th July, 1531, with dimmed eyes and disconsolate heart, and said: "For eleven years I have been preaching the gospel among you, and have warned you faithfully and paternally of the woes that are hanging over you; but no attention has been paid to my words. The friends of foreign alliances, the enemies of the gospel are elected to the council, and while you refuse to follow my advice, I am made responsible for every misfortune. I cannot accept such a position, and I ask for my dismission." He then retired from the hall, his heart swelling with emotion too deep for utterance.

The members of the council, whose old affection and respect for the man now returned in a double degree, could not endure the thought of being left by him. They entreated him to recall his resolution. He asked time for reflection. "He groaned and cried to the Lord." At length he said: "I will stay with you, and will labor for the public safety until death."

Ere long a meeting of delegates of the Protestant cantons, called him to Bremgarten. He repaired to the house of Henry Bullinger, his friend and disciple at this time. After the conference, he left him, his mind being "filled with a presentiment of his death;" and with moistened eyes he said: "O my dear Henry, may God protect you! Be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to his Church."

The Zurichers, as well as the other cantons, became less and less disposed for war. The people became alarmed. Frightful omens were said to appear. Zwingle alone was calm. "A heart that fears God," said he, "cares not for the threats of the world. To forward the designs of God, whatever may happen—this is his task. It is not to those, who fall on the battle-field, that the noblest crown belongs. Take courage then in the midst of all these dangers, through which the cause of Jesus Christ must pass. Be of good cheer! although we should never here below, see its triumphs with our eyes. The judge of the combat beholds us, and it is he who confers the crown. Others will enjoy upon earth the fruits of our labors, while we already in heaven shall enjoy an eternal reward."

These words were realized. Zwingle soon slept with his fathers; but the cause which he served, and the principles for which he contended, though for a time put back and almost crushed, regained their footing and are now gaining ground more and more.

Zwingle, in obedience to the ancient venerable custom, was requested to accompany the army, which had collected on the heights of Cappel near Zurich. He did so; having a premonition, at the same time, that it would be his last service. He was confident in his God, however, that he would overrule all for his glory. Said he, "Whatever may be my fate, I know that the truth will triumph, even when my bones shall long have been reduced to dust." Bidding an affectionate adieu to his friends and to Anna, his wife, and his children, he mounted his horse and followed the troops. Anna gazed after him with "the mild and suppliant eye of faith." "Her soul, strong as that of her husband, offered to God the sacrifice of her holiest affections." On the road, some of his friends expressed their fears for his safety. He answered: "Our cause is good; but it is

ill defended. It will cost me my life, and that of a number of excellent men, who would wish to restore religion to its primitive simplicity, and our country to its ancient manners. No matter! God will not abandon his servants; *he will come to their assistance, when you think all is lost.** My confidence rests upon him and not upon men; I submit myself to his will."

D'Aubigne says; "For a year past the gayety of the reformer had entirely disappeared: he was grave, melancholy, easily moved, having a weight on his heart that seemed to crush it. Often would he throw himself weeping at the feet of his Master, and seek in prayer the strength of which he stood in need." Having resigned all to the hands of God, he calmly proceeded on his way to Cappel. Express after express gallopped along the road from the camp of the Zurichers, begging this reserve to hasten to the defence of their brothers. When crossing the bridge of the Sihl, about half way from Cappel, they heard a cannon shot. They listen: a second, a third succeeds. Now they quicken their step and rush onward, and again they are met by messengers, exclaiming: "Hasten forwards." At this the horsemen begin to gallop toward the scene of action, and before sunset they arrived with the great banner of Zurich and a handful of men to defend it at Cappel.

As they were preparing to retire to quarters for the night, expecting the battle to be resumed in the morning, they were attacked by the enemy. Zwingle's time had come. As he was bending over a dying man, speaking words of

---

* "This prediction was strikingly verified not long after the death of the Reformer. The fatal reverses which the Protestant cantons experienced, were followed by a universal peace in the Helvetic confederacy, which secured not only the complete establishment of the Reformed religion in several of the cantons, but liberty of conscience to the Protestants in those places where the Roman Catholic religion was still adhered to by the majority of the inhabitants."

consolation in his ear, a stone hurled by a soldier hit him on the head and stopped his words. He reeled and fell, but rose again. A second time he was stricken down by a blow on his leg. Again he rose. A third time he fell and again he rose. Well adapted is this successive falling and rising, to suggest the thought of the poet:

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again."

The fourth time he received a thrust from a lance above his breast, and sinking fell upon his knees. This is the dark hour for Zwingle; but in the midst of all, he triumphs. As he beheld the blood trickling down his breast, his magnanimous soul exclaims: "*Ecquid hoc infortunati? Age! corpus quidem occidere possunt; animam non possunt.* What! is this a misfortune? Ah! they may indeed kill the body; but they cannot kill the soul." These were the last words of Zwingle. He immediately fell backward and expired under a pear tree, which was long pointed out to succeeding generations as "Zwingle's pear tree." As he lay here with his dying eyes lifted to heaven, he was asked: "Do you wish for a priest to confess yourself?" Not able to speak, he made signs in the negative. Again, he was asked, and again he shook his head. A soldier then came up who recognized him, and taking his sword, struck him on the throat, saying: "Die, obstinate heretic."

Thus died Zwingle, a martyr for religious liberty, and a man who, if he had been favored with proper circumstances, would have accomplished one of the greatest works ever achieved by human genius; and whose example, as it is, is destined to effect yet much good in coming time. He died at the age of forty six, having accomplished but little of his designs; but his words and his deeds and his spirit exerted a great influence upon his times and upon those who succeeded him, especially upon Calvin, and, through him, upon England, and the United States, in which countries his

words and deeds find a welcome echo, and a true and warm reception.

As Zwingle lay under the pear tree, a crowd of soldiers pressed around the body, "surprised at the sight of their most formidable enemy stretched lifeless on the plain." One, who once loved him, said: "He has the look of a living, rather than a dead man. Such was he, when he kindled the people by the fire of his eloquence." Another who formerly resided in Zurich and retired to Zug at the epoch of the Reformation, could not restrain his tears. "Whatever may have been thy creed," said he, "I know, Zwingle, that, thou hast been a loyal confederate! May thy soul rest with God!"

Those, who favored the foreign service, however, and the Roman faith, and on whom Zwingle never ceased to make war, were not so friendly disposed. They demanded that the body should be divided into five portions, each of which should be sent to one of the five Catholic cantons, to be burnt for heresy. Some cried, "Peace be to the dead! let God be his judge now." But vain was their cry. His enemies agreed to divide his body and burn it. The decision was carried out, and flames consumed the disjointed members, and his ashes, first trampled under foot, were flung to the four winds of heaven.

This event gave rise to the following tribute of respect to his memory, by the learned Beza:

"Zwinglius arderet gemino quum sanctus amore,
Nempe Dei imprimis, deinde enim Patriae;
Dicitur in solidum se devovisse duobus,
Nempe Deo imprimis, deinde enim Patriae;
Quam bene persolvit simul istis vota duobus;
Pro patria animis, pro pietate cinis."

It may be thus translated:

When the breast of holy Zwingle glowed with two-fold love,
First to his God, and then to his own dear native land;

'Tis said he gave himself unceasingly to serve them both ;
First his God and then his own beloved native land.
Well has he performed his part: his vows fulfilled in death !
Mangled and slain for his country ; burnt for his religion."

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Zwingle was essentially a man of peace. True, he had much of the warlike element in his nature, and circumstances brought him into the camp and on the battle field ; yet, he had no more of a contentious spirit, than was sufficient to make him earnest and useful. In public life, when advising rulers, he maintained the right and duty of rulers to punish evil doers, and also the right of revolution in the people, when governments did not accomplish their design. This right he considered as given them of God. The powers that be—the governments—are ordained of God : and if they do not accomplish his will, in the main, it is the duty of the people, in whom is vested the right, to overturn and change them. Zwingle contended for the rights of man and the rights of God. He instructed the people to obey the laws of the land, whatever they were, provided they did not interfere with their duty to their God and their opinions in religious matters. In this he imitated Christ.

In private life—in the pastorate—and as a citizen, he was accustomed to receive insults and injuries without retaliation. He did not return evil for evil; but by kindness and charity he won many hearts to Christ and to the reformation. It was not because he could not make himself felt by vindictiveness and repartee, that he did not con-

tend in a boisterous manner, and quarrel with men in the streets and in public places. The *spirit* of a Christian gentleman, more than the studied art of politeness, kept him from such rudeness, while at the same time it prompted him, in mildness and firmness, to drop a word for Christ by the way, and, in his public ministrations, to attack all forms of vice and error; for, on all proper occasions, and in his sermons he would make offenders quail before the force of God's truth. In this he was like Christ, of whom it was prophesied, that he should "not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets;" that he should not make any public ostentation or show of his abilities, and sound a trumpet before him, and employ worldly and carnal ways for advancing his cause; but who, on fit occasions, denounced the rulers of the Jews, as scribes, pharisees, hypocrites.

The tenor of Zwingle's conduct was mild and affable. He breathed the spirit of that gospel, which proclaims peace on earth and good will to men. The love of Christ, that true bond of union which should bind together the brotherhood of man, constrained him. A true Christian feeling is not a vindictive or revengeful feeling. How often is this forgotten! Charity, which is the greatest Christian virtue, is the least cultivated. How easily are we tempted to be revenged. True, we cannot but be roused to anger by wicked actions in others, but we should not become the executors of punishment. There is the law of the land, to which recourse may be had, and the judgment day will settle all disputes. There is a God to whom vengeance belongeth. The Quakers have given us a good example, in their application to private life, of the virtues of kindness and peace; although, in other respects, their doctrines lead to infidelity. In the cultivation of a spirit of kindness, we would do well to remember the Quakers and others, as well

as Christ, who have given us examples of kindness, and have shown that it is both possible and practicable.

The world is yet far behind what it ought to be, in the exercise of this virtue. We flatter ourselves, that we are, in a great measure, free from a spirit of war and persecution; but considering his times and circumstances, Zwingle will bear a comparison with the best of us. It has been said: "Kindness kills the devil." Zwingle's kindness and generosity killed the demon of malice in many of his enemies. Even after his death, his kind and tolerant spirit influenced his enemies, as is shown by the religious toleration which ensued. We here bid adieu to Zwingle, hoping to meet him in the land of peace, where truth forever triumphs.

34.77-9

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2006

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 016 147 659 6